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CENTRAL-AFRICAN PLURIARCS AND THEIR PLAYERS IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY BRAZIL

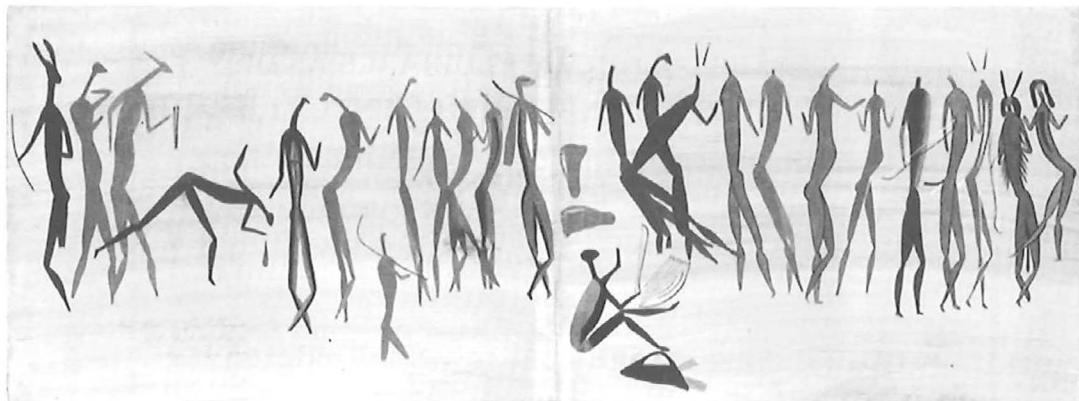
ROGÉRIO BUDASZ

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Seven convex bows are lined up on the ground. A man hits them with a concave bow. A bag of arrows lies by his side and a group of people dance in front of him. Is he making music? Are they dancing to it? So wondered the South African geologist and ethnologist George William Stow (1822–1882) in the early 1870s, after examining a rock painting near Phuthaditjhaba (then Witsieshoek), South Africa [fig. 1].¹ Recognizing this painting as an important piece of information about earlier Khoisan musical practices, Stow concluded that it depicted a prototype of the pluriarc, or bow lute, a musical instrument once widely dispersed along the Atlantic coast of Africa, from the Republic of Guinea to Namibia.²

The main premise of his posthumous book *The Native Races of South Africa* was that the Khoisan were not naïve importers of material culture from northern “intruders”—as he called the Bantu and the Europeans—but creators of original artifacts and innovative techniques. Yet, in spite of Stow’s findings, historical records indicate that the pluriarc was not indigenous to southern Africa, but arrived there with Bantu migrants during precolonial times. Not only were musical instruments exchanged with the already established populations, but the changing landscapes that Bantu groups like the Ambo³ and Herero crossed before reaching Khoisan lands determined changes in their modes of production, resulting in some reshaping of their communal practices and material culture. Similar encounters happened throughout central Africa during precolonial times and were followed by centuries of disruptive contacts with Europe and the Americas, marked by colonization, enslaving, and the transatlantic transference of populations and cultural systems.

In Brazil, the pluriarc has a documented existence since the late eighteenth century. Its disappearance in the late nineteenth century coincides with its vanishing in some urban centers of central Africa, but contrasts with its enduring presence in rural areas of Angola, Congo, Gabon, Namibia, and Botswana. The Brazilian history of the pluriarc also diverges from that of a number of other instruments brought from central Africa and reinvented in the context of Afro-Brazilian traditions and urban popular music. This article considers the dispersal of the pluriarc in Brazil, from the late eighteenth to late nineteenth century as recorded in a small number of sources, namely three watercolors from ca. 1780 to ca. 1830, one photograph of ca. 1880, and three written reports from ca. 1811 to ca. 1830. I articulate these findings with recent theories on central African cultural reconfiguration in Brazil and compare them with late twentieth-century developments in Angola and the Republic of Congo, where wars, urbanization, and political changes continued to influence the uses, playing techniques, and repertoires of a number of traditional musical instruments. However, before engaging more firmly in this discussion, I will consider some aspects related to the typology, distribution, and uses of pluriarcs.



1. George W. Stow, Copy of rock painting from a cave in Great Ravine, northeast of Maluti Range, near Witsieshoek, South Africa. Watercolor, 78.54 × 32.17 cm. Cape Town, Iziko South African Museum, George William Stow Collection, 01 93D.

EXAMINING THE PLURIARC. Early academic interest in the pluriarc coincided with the development of cultural historicism in German anthropology in the early twentieth century. In the late 1890s Bernhard Ankermann and Fritz Graebner worked on the cataloguing of the extensive collection of African and Pacific music instruments held at the Ethnologisches Museum of Berlin. Developing and expanding the ideas of their masters Friedrich Ratzel and Leo Frobenius, the two young curators proposed the concept of cultural circles, which became a key element of the diffusionist school of anthropology. Their main premise was that cultural traits expand from a single geographical point to neighboring cultural complexes, acquiring distinctive but still recognizable features. Individual clusters could be related to each other in a variety of levels, including historically, as cultural traits were shared by diverse societies at different points in time. Ankermann and Graebner hoped that careful studies would be able to reveal the ultimate place of origin of specific objects and their geographical diffusion in a series of layered "circles". Pluriarcs were among the first objects they used to illustrate their theories. In 1901 Ankermann published a monograph on African musical instruments,⁴ synthesizing there his early work at the Berlin museum and providing a basis for his continuing work with Graebner in the Kulturkreis hypothesis.⁵ Their writings reflect in many ways the nature of anthropological research at that time, as Ankermann and Graebner published their main works before the fieldwork revolution of the 1920s. Another problem was the quality of their sample, with a notable underrepresentation of areas outside the German colonial influence. The lack of contextual information on the instruments, mostly collected by explorers, missionaries, and dilettantes, must have played a role as well. In spite of these drawbacks, as Nettl points out, the Kulturkreis school had a profound impact in the field, reverberating in a number of concepts and theories throughout the twentieth century.⁶

Ankermann devoted to the pluriarc six pages of his monograph *Die Afrikanischen Musikinstrumente*. He classified the museum's pluriarcs (string instruments / section VI) into three main categories, based on the way string carriers were attached to the resonator. He realized that instruments of each category were clustered in a particular geographic area:

- VIa. Instruments with string carriers attached underneath the resonator, found between the Ogoué and Congo basins from Gabon to northern Angola;
- VIb. Instruments with string carriers attached to the lower part of the instrument, with a triangle-shaped resonator, found between the Niger-Benue and Sanaga rivers in Nigeria and Cameroon;
- VIc. Instruments with string carriers piercing the front of the resonator, clustered in an area south of the Cunene river in northern Namibia and southern Angola.

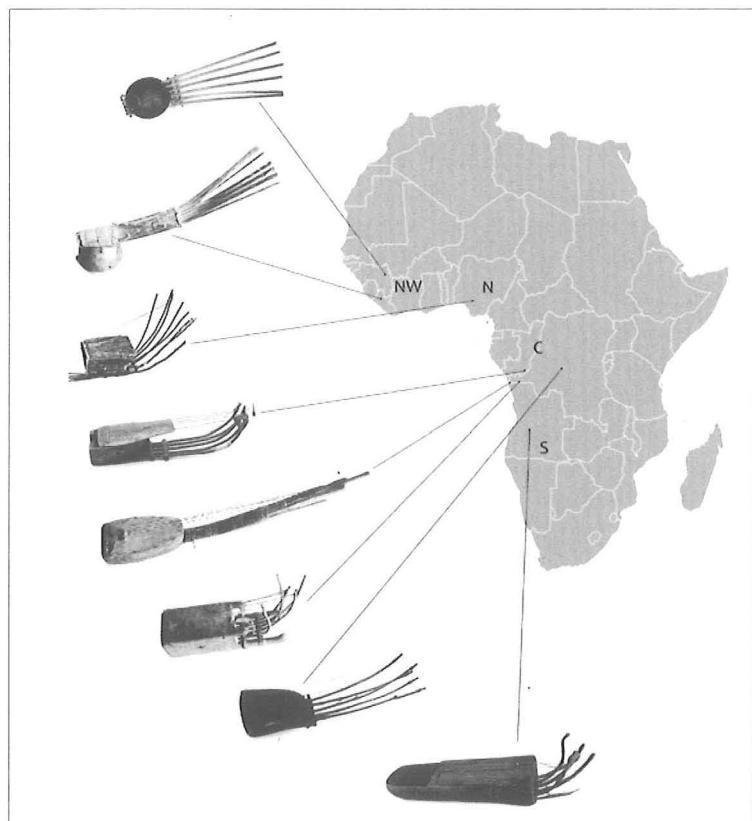
Nicholas England later referred to these clusters respectively as (C) central, (N) northern, and (S) southern [fig. 2]. In terms of ethnicity these three divisions roughly corresponded to the Bantu (C), Edo and Fang (N), Bantu and Khoisan (S).⁷

With regard to the C cluster, in the 1960s Jean-Sébastien Laurenty published detailed catalogs of instruments from the former Belgian Congo kept at the Koninklijk Museum voor Midden-Afrika (KMMA) in Tervuren, Belgium.⁸ Although more numerous, his sample was geographically more limited than Ankermann's. He subdivided Ankermann VIa category into ten groups (plus an additional one, assigned for "atypical instruments"). Instruments of categories VIb and VIc are absent from his catalogue, as they were nonexistent in the former Belgian Congo.⁹ Addressing some of the main problems in Ankermann's method – the emphasis on style and traits of specific objects and a relative disregard for the uses and functions of such objects on a given culture¹⁰ – Laurenty provided more contextual information than his predecessors, making use of recent ethnographic scholarship, and detailing the instruments' construction materials, ornamentation, indigenous names, and precise geographic origin.

Åke Norborg proposed a slightly more complex approach, subdividing Ankermann's three groups into five by further elaborating the criteria for placement of the string carriers without placing too much weight on geographical aspects:

1. pluriarcs with string carriers fitted in holes at the top end of the resonator;
2. pluriarcs with string carriers running along a concavity at the back of the resonator and fitted into holes at the bottom end of the concavity;
3. pluriarcs with string carriers running along and fixed to the back of the resonator;
4. pluriarcs with string carriers piercing the resonator;
5. pluriarcs with string carriers fixed to the front of the resonator.¹¹

Norborg provided an outstanding list of references for each instrument, gathered from a myriad of sources – iconography, recordings, and reports from colonial administrators, missionaries, naturalists, explorers, and anthropologists, among other types of support. In his recent Grove article, Gerhard Kubik followed Ankermann's three-cluster partition when analyzing the geographical dispersion of instruments, but merged VIa and VIb instruments (C and N clusters) when talking about structural aspects. Using the string-carrier placement criterion, Kubik established two main groups:

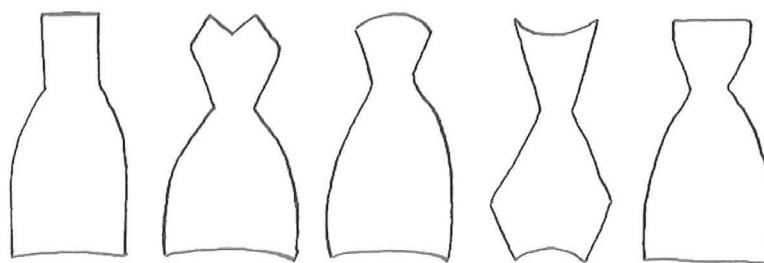


2. Clusters of pluriarc distribution.

1. pluriarcs with string carriers inserted into a series of holes bored into the top wall of the resonator (Ankermann VIc, and Norborg 1 and 4);
2. pluriarcs with string carriers attached to the back of the resonator and/or partly inserted (Ankermann VIIa and VIIb, Laurenty 1 to 10, and Norborg 2 and 3).¹²

Nicholas England warned that these classifications overlooked another type of pluriarc found in a fourth geographical cluster in the Upper Guinea Coast, hereafter identified as northwestern (NW). Having a series of bamboo bows functioning as string carriers and attached to a large gourd – either piercing it or being affixed to its upper side – this is the only model that really conforms to a strict definition of “pluriarc”, fitting perfectly in Stow’s evolutionary scheme.¹³ To further complicate things, a variety of the VIc model is found among the Fang in Gabon and Cameroon, hundreds of miles north of the S cluster, without any ethnic, commercial, or religious connection.¹⁴ With more or less success, each scholar who used Ankermann’s system as a starting point had to address a much more important limitation, which is its inadequacy to deal with issues related to musical systems and repertoires, the function and meaning of pluriarcs and their music, and how these objects and sounds relate to a whole socio-cultural continuum. Studying shapes, stringing, tuning, ornamentation, and building materials are necessary steps in certain types of research – historical, organological, museological, to name a few – and in the past these approaches gave us some idea of the origin and geographical dispersion of instruments and players, even revealing scalar patterns that served as basis for their music. However, field research carried out by a group of scholars, particularly during the 1960s, added a new, emic dimension to these studies, resulting in works that for the first time explained the uses and functions of pluriarcs and their music from the vantage point of practitioners and immediate listeners. In the following paragraphs I will highlight some aspects of these works in relation to experiences of Central-African slaves and their descendants in nineteenth-century Brazil. These connections will become more evident in the second and third parts of this article, when I will examine Brazilian records on the pluriarc.

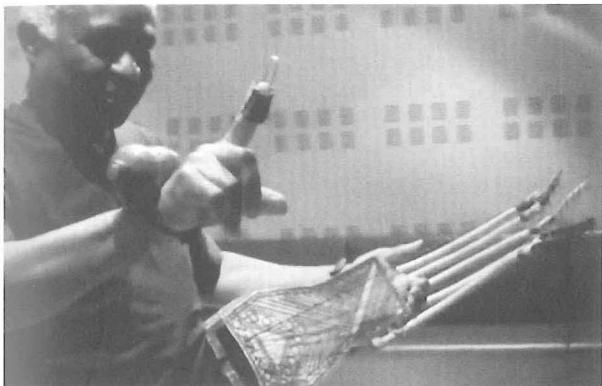
Since World War II, the C cluster has been covered more intensively than other regions of pluriarc dispersion. After Joseph Maes in the 1930s and Gilbert Rouget in the 1940s, Pierre Sallée visited central Africa intermittently between 1962 and 1978. In one of these trips, he examined the use of the large pluriarc ngwomi among the Téké of eastern Gabon. As he explained, the Téké used the ngwomi in the onkila dance, a healing ceremony that involves possession by nkita water spirits.¹⁵ Dedicated to the nkita that oversees fertility and usually performed after an atypical birth – of twins, child with the umbilical cord wrapped around the neck, or in the bottom down position – the onkila aims at restoring the mother’s regular fertility. Local women initiated in the onkila secret society perform this dance under the direction of the community healer, or ngaa (nganga).



3. Soundboard shapes of Pool Malebo pluriarcs.
Laurenty, *Les cordophones*, 49.

The ngaa healer is the only male figure in the onkila ritual. He prepares herbal infusions and inhalations, recites and sings sacred chants and songs, and plays the ngwomi. Sallée transcribed and analyzed one of these songs, recorded at a ceremony in Lekoni, Gabon, on 20 July 1965.¹⁶ The ngwomi used in the onkila dance was an extra-large version of a Laurenty 7 pluriarc, but the Téké and neighboring populations also play instruments of similar shape but smaller dimensions. Due to their clustering around Pool Malebo (formerly

Stanley Pool), the lake-like widening of the Congo River, east of the capital cities of Brazzaville and Kinshasa, Laurenty called them Stanley Pool type [fig. 3]. Besides their similar shape, all these instruments have five strings tuned to a pentatonic scale. The playing technique consists basically of strumming the strings with a plectrum attached to the right index finger, while the left hand builds chords by muting some strings and letting others sound [figs. 4a & 4c]. Typical features of Pool Malebo pluriarcs are the boat-shaped resonator carved out of a single piece of wood, five string carriers attached to a concavity at the back of the instrument,



Clockwise 4a. A nsambi player near Matadi, Democratic Republic of Congo. Laurenty, *Les cordophones*, pl. xxi, no. 253; 4b. Gabriel Bassomba sings and plays a nsambi kizonzolo in Ngambari, ROC. LP *Musique Congo*, Ocora-Radio France, OCR35 (1967); 4c. Bertrand N'Zoutani, from Brazzaville, ROC, shows the plectrum at a master class in Montreal. Aude Rain, *Musique traditionnelle du Congo*, short film (2011).

and the soundboard that covers the resonator's mouth, except for a small opening at the bottom and a prolongation at the top end. The material of choice around Pool Malebo for both resonator and soundboard is the Parasol tree – *Polyscias fulva* (Hiern) Harms. The strings are made out of vegetable fibers, mainly raphia or calamus.

Sylvie Le Bomin's 2004 sojourn in the Téké plateau in eastern Gabon resulted in an informative essay on musical practices in the same area that Sallée visited forty years earlier.¹⁷ But Le Bomin went further in contextualizing onkila rituals, providing details on religious beliefs, landscape, cultural administration, and music venues. She also explored the function and position of musicians in society, particularly the multiple roles of the ngaa, and also analyzed the music of an onkila, explaining the role of each performer in its polyphonic texture. Her continuous dialogue with previous research by Rouget, Laurenty, and Sallée provides a remarkable historical perspective on the Téké music over a sixty-year period.

Back in the 1960s, Sallée also worked with informants of the Eshira and Vili ethnicities, interviewing and recording pluriarc players in the coastal town of Port Gentil and the capital city Libreville. He explained that among the Vili, who inhabit the region of former Loango kingdom, the nsambi is an instrument of mediation between humans and the bakisi entities in the dance of divination liboka.¹⁸ This dance has some similarities with the bwiti ritual of the Fang. Liboka is the Vili name for the hallucinogenic iboga root, the central element in the bwiti ritual. Another similarity is that in both rituals, a string instrument is given a primary role – the ngombi harp in the bwiti and the nsambi pluriarc in the liboka.¹⁹ The Vili nsambi is a Laurenty 9 pluriarc, which Sallée calls Loango type. Among its remarkable features are the five long and flexible string carriers woven together for most of their extension in an intricate design and a light, sometimes ornamented, trapezoid-shape resonator. Since its depiction by Michel Praetorius in 1620, this design has remained stable.²⁰ Players of this type of pluriarc use a plucked style technique similar to that of the S, N, and NW clusters.

Charles Duvelle, who in 1966 recorded a pluriarc player in a purely secular context [fig. 4b], asserted that among the Lari, in the vicinity of Brazzaville, the Pool Malebo pluriarc, there known as nsambi kizonzolo, also had a strong religious connection:

Indeed, the pluriarc is often an exclusive prerogative of the healer (in this case the strings are strummed with a plectrum) so it is a “sacred” instrument, to such an extent that it is often found among the “fetishes”, objects that new followers reject publicly as a sign of renunciation of the values of their traditional religion when they convert to Christianity or a similar messianic religion.²¹

In essence, these accounts portray the central African pluriarc as intrinsically related to the social life of a community, a key player in herbal treatments, trance rituals, and funerals, and for these connections, a prerogative of the ngaa, or nganga. Laurenty further proposed that some pluriarcs, especially the larger ones, were regarded more as a great chief’s display of power than a musical instrument.²² Yet, Duvelle and Le Bomin have shown that pluriarcs in central Africa have also been used as purely secular instruments, in more informal contexts and with no gender, class, or age restrictions. Maes discussed the versatility of the instrument already in 1938:

Just as with the Teke and Mfinu, it consists of a musical instrument of the private life. A native plays it while sitting in the hangar of the blacksmith; when some would gather at night outside a hut, they would talk about the day’s events, or they may rest from the fatigue, while tobacco passes from mouth to mouth. In this case, a lukombe of small size is used, easy to handle and transport and making sounds that are not very intense.²³

Unfortunately, his comments were not followed by field research, and it took three decades for a significant study on more informal uses of the pluriarc to appear, yet covering a different area.

Nicholas England based his 1968 doctoral dissertation on research carried out in Namibia, Botswana, and southern Angola during his trip as a member of the Peabody-Harvard Kalahari Expeditions of 1957, 1959, and 1961. Roughly covering the whole geographic extension of the S cluster,²⁴ he concentrated on the //gwashi, an Ankermann VIc pluriarc used by the Ju/'hoansi (or Zū'wā-si), a subgroup of the San. The instrument appears in two variants, the five-string !gauka, which is said to be a male instrument, and its female counterpart, the four-string //gwashi. Yet, there are no gender or age restrictions as to who can play these instruments and the repertory is also interchangeable. However, England perceived two distinct levels of proficiency. Often a person would play only a handful of rudimentary patterns to accompany short tunes without ever achieving a command of the instrument. But in a few cases, two to four male and female performers in a given community took their training more seriously and gained knowledge and ability to play the complex songs of the traditional repertory.²⁵ England divided the //gwashi repertory into three main groups: (1) songs for the instrument, (2) songs about nature, and (3) songs about people. Among the latter, he recognized a type of forum for comment on social norms, a “psychic cathartic” achieved by exposing relevant issues to the group.²⁶

Southern Angola pluriarcs are commonly known by the name tchihumba and its variants.²⁷ They are found in the Huila province (among the Nkhumbi, Handa, and Mwila, subgroups of the Nyaneka), in Benguela (among the Ovimbundu), and in the Cunene and Namibe provinces (among the Mukubal and Himba, subgroups of the Herero), all of them belonging to Ankerman VIc group.²⁸ England, who visited the Mukubal in 1959, explained that they used the otjihumba “to accompany solo songs that tell of family and tribal genealogies, deeds of war, incidents in the lives of individuals, or the cattle and their various markings”.²⁹

Not nearly as diversified as instruments of the C cluster, and not as strongly linked to communal rituals, pluriarcs of southern Angola are played on a variety of pastoral, domestic, and healing settings. Although their resonators are relatively similar to each other, some are light and portable, while others are much heavier. The number of strings varies from five to eight, a preference that not always follows ethnic lines.³⁰ Lisbon’s Museu Nacional de Etnologia has a collection of Nyaneka and Herero pluriarcs, some with five string carriers (of the Nkhumbi and Mukubal), and others with seven or eight string carriers (of the Mwila). In his 1965 trip to Huila, Gerhard Kubik interviewed and recorded Handa and Nkhumbi musicians.³¹ Since England and Kubik, no significant work has surfaced on southwestern African pluriarcs. Recent travels by Victor Gama under his project Tsikaya have highlighted a number of Ovimbundu pluriarc players in the vicinity of Benguela, the first significant mapping of traditional music in Angola after the civil war.³²

Dan Ben-Amos covered the N cluster in a landmark monograph on the prism-shaped akpata (Ankermann VIb), in the rural surroundings of Benin City. Ben-Amos, who did fieldwork in Nigeria in 1966,

explained that this light and portable pluriarc is an exclusively male instrument, associated with Edo story-tellers and has documented existence in the former Benin Empire since precolonial times.³³ As for the NW cluster, recordings from Liberia and the Republic of Guinea have surfaced in 1953 and 1972,³⁴ and the uses, repertory, and social context of one of these instruments – the dan, played by the Mande in Mali – were covered in a 2002 book chapter by Sekou Camara. Remarkably, it was the first academic work on the pluriarc to be written by a performer of the instrument.³⁵

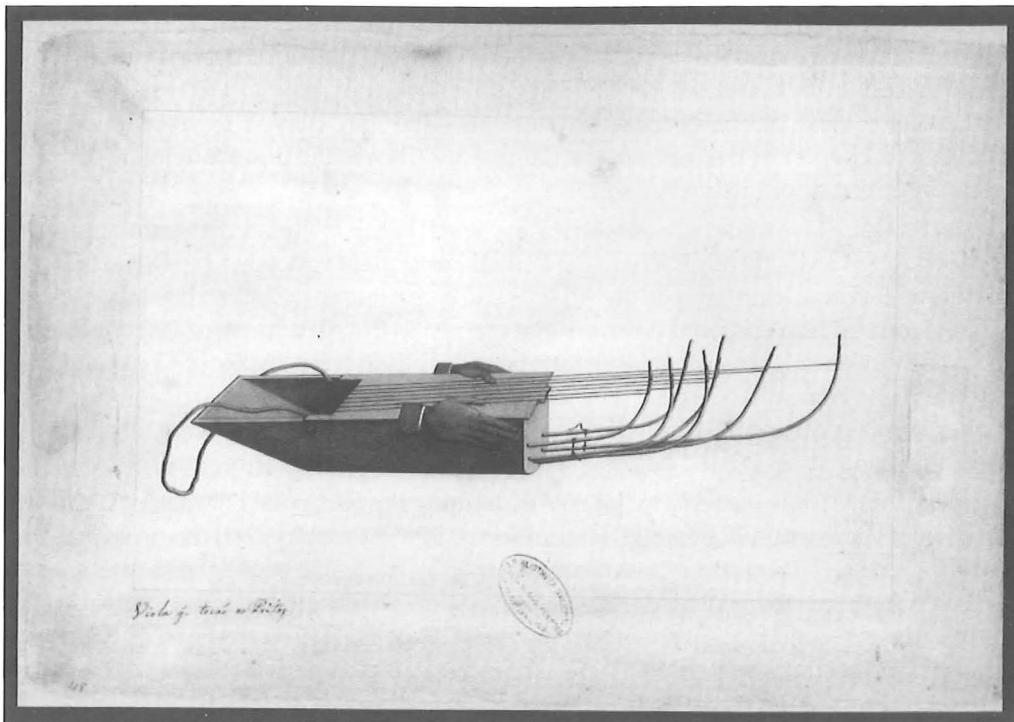
PLURIARCS IN BRAZIL. Slave trade between Africa and Brazil began in the late sixteenth century and declined after the Aberdeen Act of 1845, through which the British Parliament conceded the Royal Navy authority to search and seize any slave trafficking ship in the Atlantic and arrest its crew. During those almost three centuries, the majority of the four million enslaved Africans that arrived in Brazil came from Angola-Benguela and the Congo basin. In the nineteenth century, a large number of captives from the Gold Coast and Bight of Benin were taken to Bahia and Maranhão, where they quickly outnumbered central Africans. Southeast Africans arrived in smaller numbers during the first half of the nineteenth century, concentrating mostly in Rio de Janeiro and its surroundings and stressing the heterogeneous ethnic profile of that region.

The dynamics of slave trade played a major role in defining the particular character of Afro-Brazilian culture in each region of the Portuguese colony, later independent monarchy. Yet, due to overlapping cultural layers created by successive migrations and more recently by revivalist strategies, sometimes the material culture of a given region seems to contradict those population displacements. The Central-African musical bow, for example, disappeared from areas where the majority of the population was of Bantu origin (Rio de Janeiro and Minas Gerais) but survived in places where West-African influence was overwhelming (Bahia and Maranhão).

Pluriarcs were once a common sight in some parts of Brazil. Iconographic records attest the existence of instruments from the C cluster in Rio de Janeiro and from the S cluster in northern Brazil. However, in spite of the large West-African population in Bahia and Maranhão, there is no evidence that pluriarcs of the N and NW clusters ever made it to Brazil.

1. Joaquim José Codina and José Joaquim Freire. On 19 February 1776, the population of Belém, in the northern part of Portuguese America, received news that the ship Santo Antonio Delfim had returned from Benguela, with “the best and healthiest group of slaves” ever seen in that region.³⁶ This was the first trip of a new service to Angola by the Companhia Geral do Grão Pará e Maranhão, after criticism on previous shipments from the Upper Guinea Coast. The company intended to bring one thousand slaves per year from Benguela, on top of the five hundred that were already arriving from Guinea’s ports of Bissau and Cacheu. Not among the most important destinations in Portuguese America for enslaved Africans, Belém, in the Captaincy of Grão-Pará, received 8,271 Africans from the Guinea and 6,478 from Angola-Benguela between 1757 and 1778, when the company was terminated.³⁷ From the 2,496 brought from the port of Benguela, the majority were Ovimbundu along with captives of Mwila, Nkhumbi, and Handa ethnicities, from the Huila Plateau, southeast of Benguela. Some time between 1783 and 1792, naturalist Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira (1756–1815) met a man, most likely from the Huila plateau, who played the pluriarc. Although the meeting was not recorded in the diaries of his *Viagem Filosófica* – a nine-year scientific expedition from Belém to the upper Rio Negro and Mato Grosso – Ferreira’s texts suggest that it took place in Belém or Cuiabá, places where he identified a significant number of African slaves. Ferreira was accompanied by two illustrators, Joaquim José Codina and José Joaquim Freire. The latter was a second lieutenant and cartographer trained at the Arsenal Real do Exército in Lisbon, but almost nothing is known about the former. One of them drew a pluriarc with the precision of a technical drawing [fig. 5].

Viagem filosófica was a term coined by Domenico Vandelli, Ferreira’s professor at the University of Coimbra. He devised three philosophical voyages to be undertaken by his disciples in the Portuguese colonies of Africa and South America. These expeditions had the purpose of describing the fauna, flora, minerals, ethnic groups, and the social and political life of regions that were not well understood by the Portuguese crown. The rationale for these voyages derived from natural philosophy and Vandelli was particularly influenced by Linnaeus’s principles of categorization. Drawings would serve as auxiliary records to verbal descriptions,

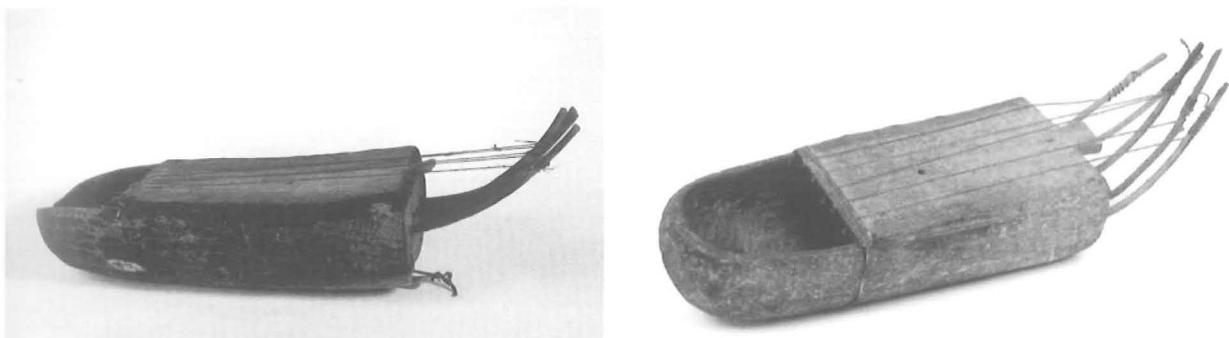


5. Joaquim José Codina or José Joaquim Freire, "Viola q. tocaõ os Pretos" (ca. 1780). The earliest representation of pluriarc in Brazil, encountered during the expedition of Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira, probably in Belém or Cuiabá. Rio de Janeiro, Biblioteca Nacional, Seção de Manuscritos, MAP.I.4.01 nº 013B.

providing another angle and stimulating the senses in more compelling ways. An image was both a document and a didactic tool. Thus, when Codina and Freire drew musical instruments, hunting and fishing tools, domestic artifacts, and weapons, their goal was also to provide precise information on the technological expertise of a specific ethnic group, so the colonizers could exploit it or annul it. Even drawings of musical instruments – a pluriarc and a lamellophone (probably a kissanji or mbira) along with several Amerindian instruments – would give colonial administrators some idea on the woodworking skills and manual dexterity of the African and Amerindian populations.

In drawing the pluriarc, the artist chose an angle that could provide the maximum information about the object. He identified the instrument as "Viola q. tocaõ os Pretos" (a guitar that the blacks play), and depicted it as being held horizontally.³⁸ The watercolor bears notable similarities with present-day tchihumbas and with instruments acquired in the same region during the 1960s and now at Lisbon's Museu Nacional de Etnologia.³⁹ It depicts an instrument with seven string carriers – the Mwila instruments in Lisbon have seven or eight – and shows a cord attached to the instrument with the obvious function of being tied to the musician's waist allowing him to play while walking. The watercolor also shows the position of the hands, which allows the thumb and index fingers to pluck the strings.⁴⁰

A small salience in the frontal section of the soundboard in Codina/Freire's watercolor is also present in Mukubal instruments in Lisbon and Ambo pluriarcs at museums in Geneva and Tervuren [figs. 6a & 6b]. It could have been used to attach a cord, but Codina/Freire's watercolor shows that the cord is tied to the other end of the soundboard, while Nkhumbi and Mwila instruments in Lisbon have cords tied to the resonator's lower frontal part, not the soundboard. This little ornamental detail looks similar to the soundboard extension in the Laurenty 7 / Pool Malebo pluriarc [fig. 4a].⁴¹ One may assume that a common ancestor



6. Frontal salience in pluriarcs of southwest Africa: (a) Mukubal Otxihumba. Lisbon, Museu Nacional de Etnologia, AG563; (b) Himba Otjihumba. Geneva, Musée d'Ethnographie, ETHMU053985.

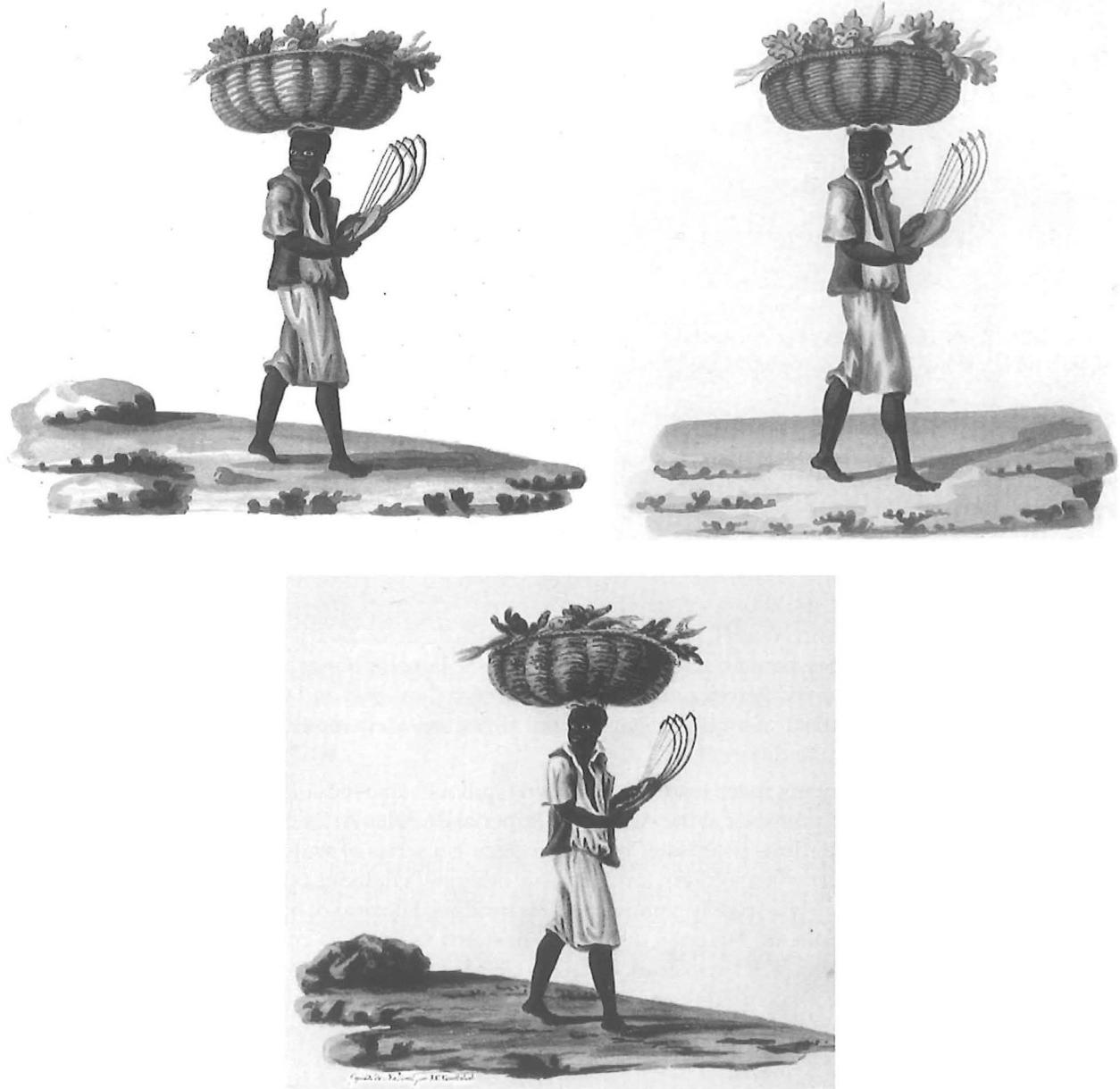
suffered structural transformations during the Bantu migration from the Congo basin to the south, resulting in the eventual shrinking of the soundboard extension. England pointed out to a related variation in southern Angola and northern Namibia stating, "it appears that the farther south the pluriarc is found, the more toward the rear of the bowl the plate is placed."⁴²

2. Joaquim Cândido Guillobel and Henry Chamberlain. Early in the nineteenth century, Joaquim Cândido Guillobel (1787–1859) and Henry Chamberlain (1796–1844) depicted a variety of Afro-Brazilian musical scenes in Rio de Janeiro. They painted musical bows, pluriarcs, lamelophones, and one-string fiddles. Just like the artists who accompanied Ferreira in the *Viagem Filosófica*, Guillobel and Chamberlain learned drawing and painting in the context of a military education. However, their motivation for depicting African musical instruments was quite different.

The Portuguese military engineer Joaquim Cândido Guillobel enjoyed a long and prolific career as a cartographer, architect, and professor at the Academia Imperial de Belas Artes in Rio de Janeiro. He arrived in Rio de Janeiro in 1808 and three years later began producing a series of watercolors of popular types of the city – peddlers, carriers, monks, soldiers, among many others – "copiados do natural" (drawn from life), as he claimed. His motivation was mainly commercial. He produced dozens of hand-painted reproductions, 8 to 10 cm high, that were sold as souvenirs during the next few years, thus creating a local version of the centuries-old European tradition of street cries. As in *Les Cris de Paris*, *The Cries of London*, and many similar collections printed since the sixteenth century, Guillobel's goal was not to produce individualized portraits, but to depict the most picturesque human types and activities of Rio's streets using a generic vocabulary of gestures, symbols, and objects. In a recent study on visual representations of slaves in Brazil and America, Marcus Wood comments on the transposition of European "cries" to Rio's tropical setting:

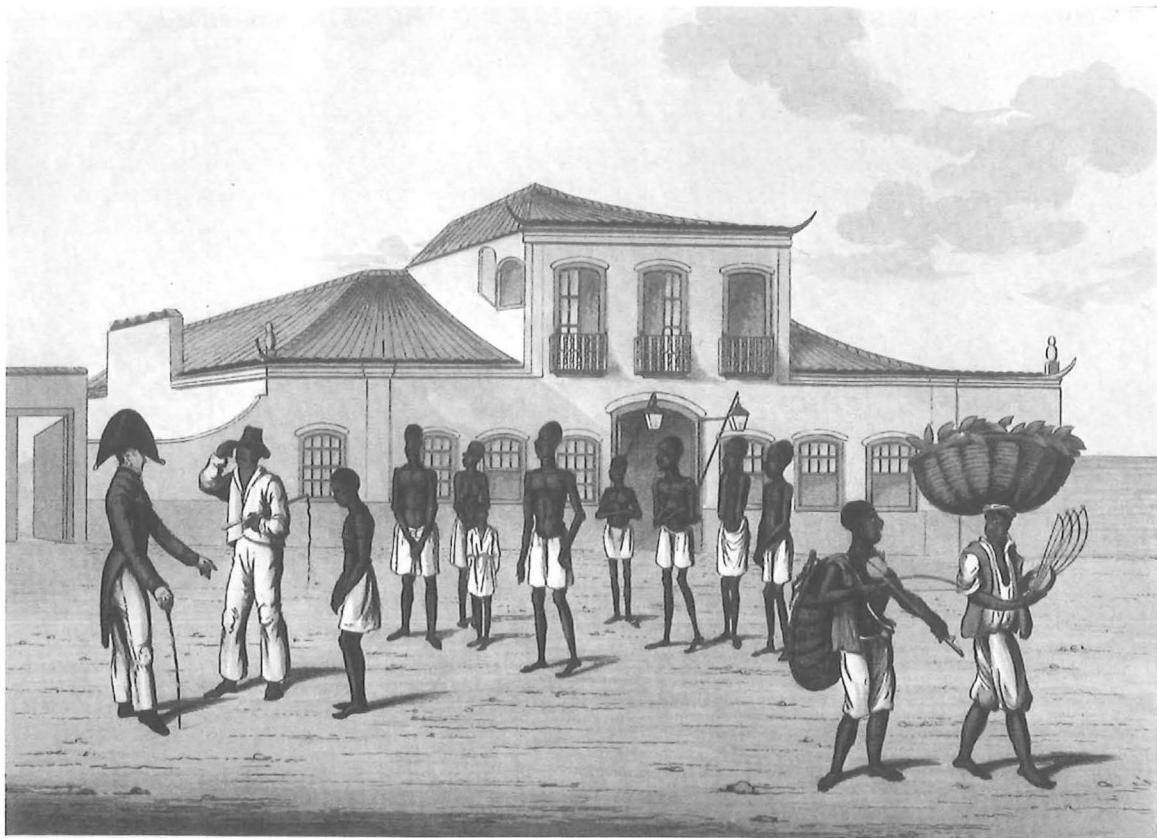
In these essentialized portraits [i.e. the "cries"] the anonymous masses who lived in the streets were prettified and disempowered in the process of being offered up to the privileged viewer. This instant access ethnography of "the other half", of the socially marginalized, set up privileged viewers with a reassuring and to an extant picturesque fantasy of the dark and unknown aspects of the lives of the labouring poor. The "cries" were consequently an invaluable paradigm for the semiotic containment of subaltern existence and as such translated with a sinister easiness into the portrayal of slave life in the Atlantic tropics, or indeed the portrayal of containment of the existence and activities of colonized peoples anywhere outside Europe.⁴³

I will add that Guillobel succeeds in the semiotic containment of his subjects not only by prettifying and disempowering them, but also through careful, sometimes contradictory choices. He portrays barefoot black men playing African musical bows, lamelophones, and pluriarcs, but not European fiddles, guitars,⁴⁴ and clarinets, even though these instruments were much more widespread among Rio's slaves.⁴⁵ He concentrated first and foremost on the exotic, even when portraying members of the local elite, since they often revealed aspects that he, as a European man in the tropics, found picturesque.



7. Joaquim Cândido Guillobel, (a) Young man with a four-string berimbau and a basket on his head (*Moleque com berimbau de quatro cordas e cesto à cabeça*). Watercolor. Rio de Janeiro, Cândido Guinle de Paula Machado collection; (b) Two figures carrying provisions (detail). Watercolor reproduced in the catalogue of the auction *Exploration and Travel with 20th-Century South African Paintings* (London: Christie's, 2000), auction 6284, Tuesday 18 April 2000, lot 46; (c) Untitled. Watercolor. Petrópolis, Museu Imperial, Maria Cecília and Paulo Fontainha Geyer collection (all ca. 1812–14).

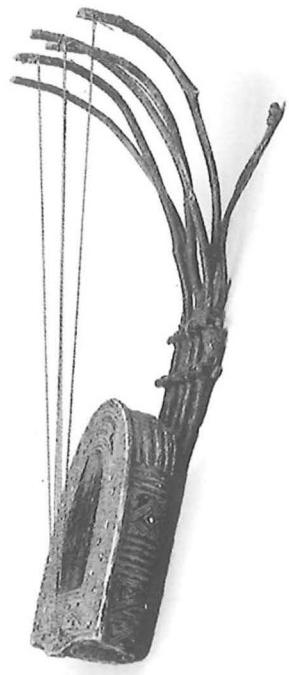
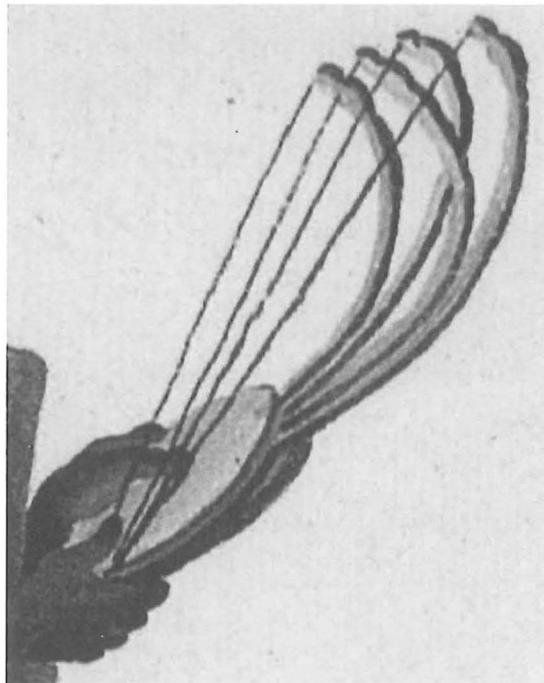
One of Guillobel's portraits shows a black man playing a pluriarc while carrying a huge basket of fish and vegetables on his head [fig. 7]. The instrument bears some similarities with the tchihumba recorded in the *Viagem Filosófica*. From the way it is carried to how its strings are plucked, it looks like an ideal instrument to accompany singing while walking or traveling on foot. Guillobel reproduced this image at least three times, with slight modifications. While the basket and the subject's pose are the same in the three versions,



8. Anonymous artist, based on watercolors of Joaquim Candido Guillobel, "Sick Negroes". Colored litograph in Henry Chamberlain, *Views and Costumes of the City and Neighbourhood of Rio de Janeiro in 1819–1820* (London: Columbian Press, 1822), pl. 29.

some elements are changed – the clothes color, the instrument's angle, and, more strikingly, the fact that one of the subjects is wearing a so-called “iron collar”, an instrument commonly deployed as a punishment to fugitive slaves. This element enhances the drama that is already present: the man is evidently in pain, with a huge load on his head and a torture device attached to his neck, but he keeps walking and playing a musical instrument. Guillobel’s primary goal here was to tranquilize the elites as to the perceived dangers of the African presence in the streets of Rio. From a simple assurance that runaway slaves would eventually get caught and punished to a romanticized discourse that slaves would gladly work under pressure and pain, as long as they were not deprived of their music, dance, and holidays, Guillobel’s representations collaborated to the cognitive containment of Rio’s black population, one among many factors that helped to prolong slavery in Brazil.

Henry Chamberlain, then First Lieutenant of the Royal Artillery and son of the Consul General of England in Brazil, made a series of drawings and watercolors during his stay in Rio de Janeiro from 1819 to 1820.⁴⁶ He later incorporated 36 of them as colored lithographs in his 1822 book. The publisher explained in the initial address that the “peculiarity of many of the customs of that remarkably interesting country”, as described in contemporaneous travel books, have “excited the attention of the public in general”, and it was the purpose of this publication to provide a visual record of the most “striking objects” that Chamberlain could find.⁴⁷ African musical instruments and music making would certainly fit the description of “striking objects” and “peculiar customs”. The aim to represent objects and customs in a way that would “excite the attention” of the British public is reflected in Chamberlain’s unashamed emphasis on alterity. Unlike Codina and Freire,



9a. Guillobel's pluriarc (detail of fig. 8); 9b. Loango-type pluriarc. Tervuren, Koninklijk Museum voor Midden-Afrika, MO.1967.63.770; 9c. Kasai-type pluriarc. *Ibid.*, MO.0.0.668.

Chamberlain was not engaged in a scientific expedition and did not have to resort to a documental and didactic pretext to ensure the legitimacy of his depictions. Chamberlain's illustrations also reveal that his artistic training was more meticulous in some aspects, particularly in depicting the human body. However, his illustrations also resort to a conventional vocabulary of *schemata*, when they are not copies from contemporaneous sources. To put it kindly, Chamberlain's illustrations complement those of Guillobel in many aspects.

Chamberlain used several of Guillobel's single images to populate his own depictions of Rio's landscape and architecture. However, although Chamberlain was very careful in the depiction of buildings and people, his musical instruments show less detail, probably due to the transposition from watercolor to lithograph. On the other hand, he added descriptive explanations to Guillobel's silent depictions. He provided the following narrative to one of his illustrations, titled "Sick Negroes", which features a four-string pluriarc with an elliptical resonator [fig. 8]:

The other two Negroes, totally unconcerned at the passing scene, and inattentive to every thing but their Musick, to which, as well as to Dancing and Finery, they are all passionately given, are pursuing their way. One a Native of Moçambique, playing upon the rude instrument of his Country, called the Madimba, a sort of Violin with a single Wire; whilst the other, a Congo Negro, is performing a different tune upon the Sambee, an instrument of his Country. Native Airs are generally preferred by them to all others, and when these Instruments are in the hands of Proficients, the Musick they are made to produce is by no means unpleasing.⁴⁸

The pluriarc player here is obviously a direct copy from Guillobel, but this does not diminish the importance of Chamberlain's comments. Writing his impressions at least five years after Guillobel stopped producing his portraits, Chamberlain most likely met a different musician, maybe even from a different ethnicity. His remarks provide some basis, albeit fragile, for some conjectures about the player and the instrument he was playing.

Besides naming the pluriarc sambee — thus eliminating a connection with southwestern Angola — he stated that its player was a "Congo Negro", an umbrella term usually referring to the Kongo, but often ex-

tended to slaves of other ethnicities captured along the lower Nyanga and Congo basins. Since this area coincides with the C cluster, the pluriarc he saw is most likely an Ankermann VIa type, which Laurenty divides into ten categories.

Nineteenth-century travelers and twentieth-century scholars mentioned pluriarcs with similar names among ethnic groups who live or used to live in this large area, and Laurenty identified a number of them within his categories 6, 7, and 9. The first and stronger possibility is that Chamberlain heard something like ntchambi, tsambi, or ntsambi, which are names of Loango pluriarcs (Laurenty 9), played plucked style by the Mpongwe, Vili, and Punu in the coastal areas of the C cluster.⁴⁹ If this is what Guillobel or Chamblain saw, they softened the angles of the trapezoid-shaped resonator, but maintained the number of strings found in some variants of this group [fig. 9b]. There are other instruments called *sambi* or *nsambi* around Pool Malebo (Laurenty 7), but they differ even more in overall shape and are played strumming style, that is, not in the way depicted by Guillobel and Chamblain.⁵⁰ A second possibility is that the instrument they saw was a lakweem or lakwemi, played by the Kuba in the Kasai province of the Democratic Republic of Congo (Laurenty 6, or Kasai type). It has a semi-elliptical resonator and bears five to eight string carriers. Both plucking and strumming techniques are associated with these instruments.⁵¹ If this was what Guillobel saw, he even depicted the pumpkin-like fashion in which the Kuba carve the resonator of some lakweem [fig. 9c]. Of course, the basic problem with this hypothesis is the assumption that Chamberlain's informant provided him with a generic, regional name for the instrument, rather than the specific one used by the Kuba.

Seventeenth-century accounts show that the designation *nsambi* for pluriarcs used to be found hundreds of miles south of the Congo river, well into Ambundu land. An instrument with this name flourished in the early kingdom of Ndongo during the notorious ruling of Ana Nzinga Mbande (1583–1663). Mostly inhabited by the Ambundu, the kingdom of Ndongo occupied a strip of land south of the kingdom of Kongo that stretched 300 miles from the Atlantic Ocean up to the Kwango river. Capuchin missionaries Giovanni Antonio Cavazzi and Girolamo Merolla visited the region in the late seventeenth century and left complementary accounts of the *nsambi*. Cavazzi portrayed the instrument in four watercolors painted in a manuscript dated 1665 and described it in his 1687 book [figs. 10a–d].⁵² Merolla described the instrument and its technique in a short passage about Ambundu music in his 1692 *Relazione*:

The other one is called *nsambi*, and it looks like a chitarrina [small five-course guitar], but without the arm, in place of which it has five small arches with strings of palm tree thread, and if one wants to play consonances, makes so that there are more or less arches in the concavity. It is played with the index finger of both hands, giving it support with the chest. If the sound is faint because it is so small, at least is not unpleasant to the ear.⁵³

A contemporary of both Cavazzi and Merolla, the military historian Antonio Cadornega called the instrument *viola ambunda*, Ambundu guitar, when discussing the virtues of the oil palm *Elaeis guineensis*, from which its strings were extracted.⁵⁴ According to Cavazzi's watercolors and descriptions, as well as those by Merolla, the Ambundu *nsambi* was played plucked style and, judging by all these accounts, a relative of Laurenty 6 or 9 pluriarcs. Disseminated in a region between Luanda and Benguela, the instrument closed the gap between S and C clusters during the seventeenth century. Although the reasons for its disappearance from Angola's central coast have not been studied, the urbanization of Luanda in the eighteenth century along with mass conversions to Christianity accelerated the acculturation of local populations. In addition, the rising of the city as a major slave exporter was a disruptive factor for many surrounding communities, certainly playing a role in the reconfiguration of their culture.

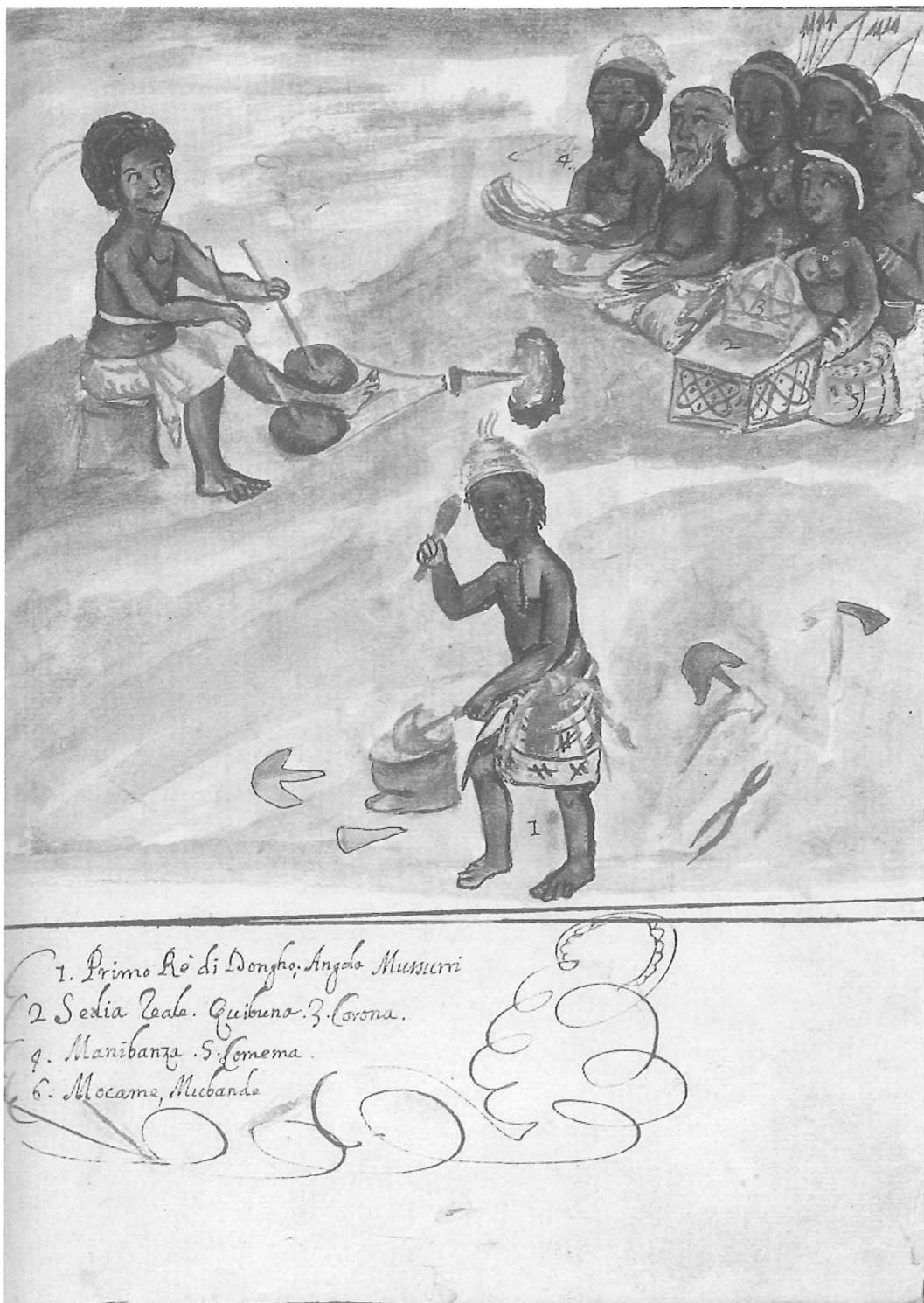
At the present research stage, the contradictions between Guillobel's picture and Chamberlain's description are not yet resolved. Chamberlain's sambee could have been a *tsambi* or an *nsambi* from a variety of different places and ethnicities. Maybe even an example of a now extinct Ambundu instrument from the former Ndongo region. As for Guillobel's watercolors, rather than depicting an individual instrument, they probably represent a composite construct, combining elements from Central and Southern pluriarcs and allowing some artistic reduction. Perhaps more importantly, these images in multiple versions reveal a reaction of elite viewers to the disquieting and alluring impression caused by those African musicians, an attempt to control their own fear by containing them in the domain of the picturesque.



10a. Giovanni Antonio Cavazzi da Montecuccolo, *Missione evangelica nel Regno de Congo* (Araldi Manuscript A; 1665). The first Ndongo sovereign forges arms and tools (Il primo sovrano dello Ndongo forgia armi e utensili), p. XXI. Modena, Araldi Family collection.



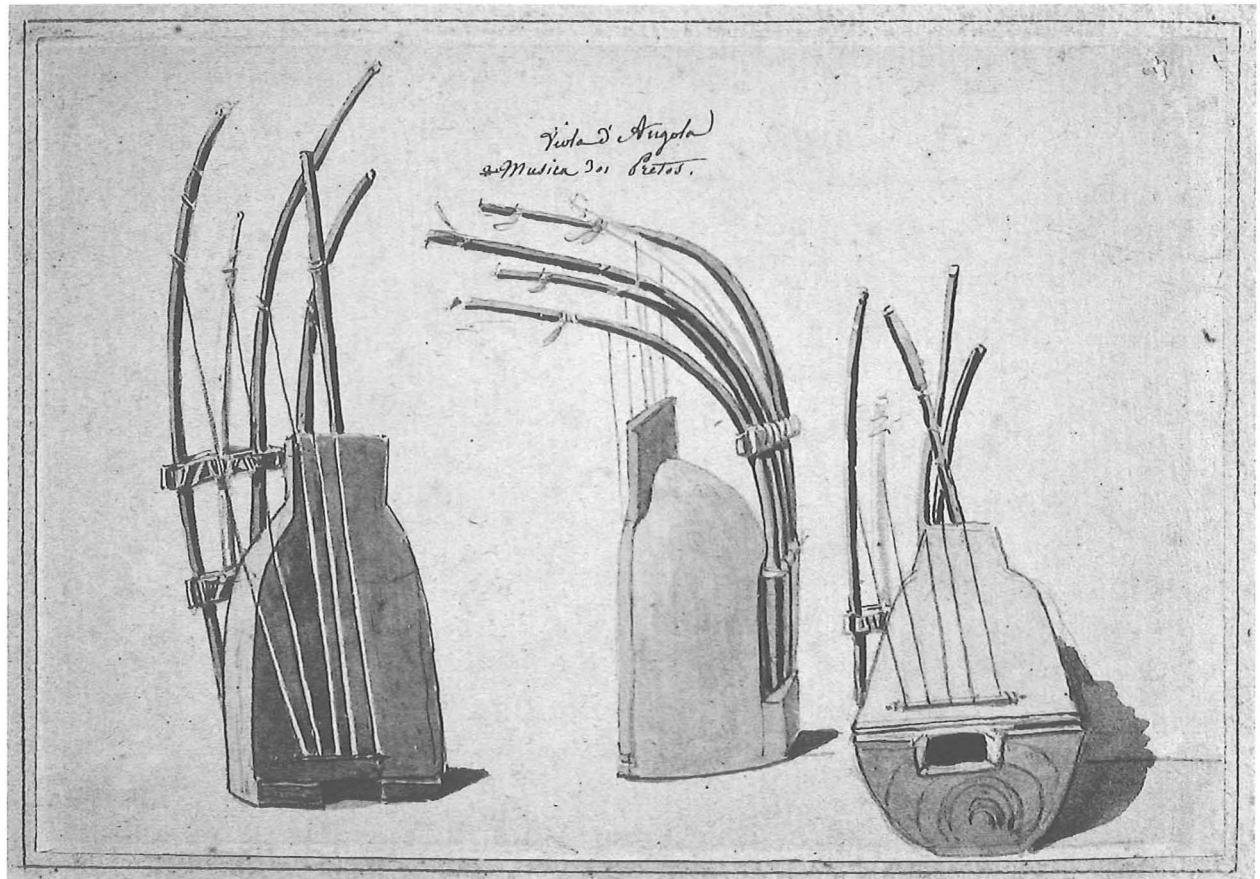
10b. Giovanni Antonio Cavazzi da Montecuccolo, *Missione evangelica nel Regno de Congo* (Araldi Manuscript A; 1665). Queen Nzinga, sitting among her maidens, observes a drum player (*La regina Nzinga seduta fra le sue ancelle osserva un suonatore di tamburo*), p. XLII. Modena, Araldi Family collection.



10c. Giovanni Antonio Cavazzi da Montecuccolo, *Missione evangelica nel Regno de Congo* (Araldi Manuscript A; 1665). The first Ndongo king in the function of forging (Il primo re dello Ndongo nella funzione di fabbro), unpaginated. Modena, Araldi Family collection.



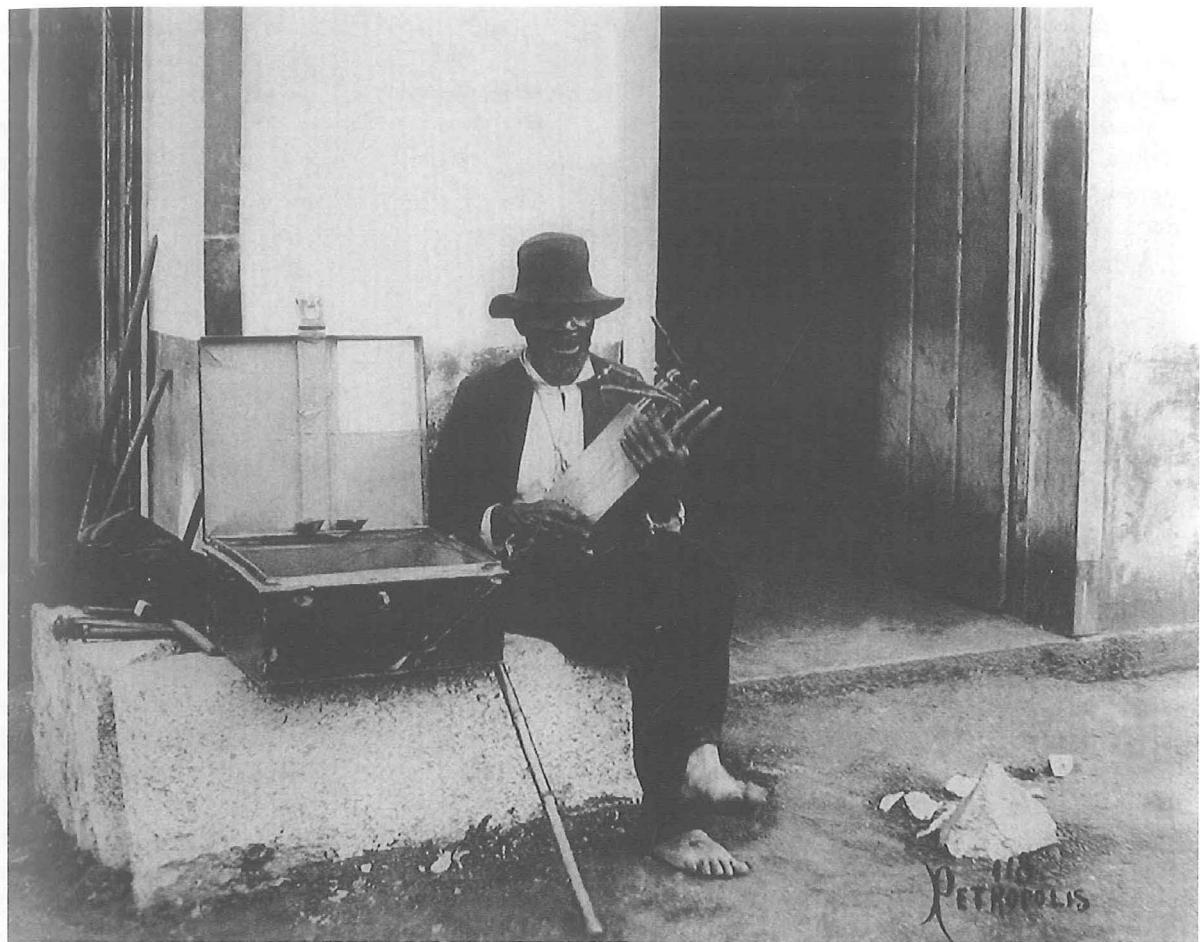
10d. Giovanni Antonio Cavazzi da Montecuccolo, *Missione evangelica nel Regno de Congo* (Araldi Manuscript A; 1665). Queen Nzinga with her entourage of soldiers and musicians (*La regina Nzinga con il suo seguito di soldati i suonatori*), unpaginated. Modena, Araldi Family collection.



11. Jean-Baptiste Debret, "Viola d'Angola, Musica dos Pretos" (ca. 1820–30). Watercolor, 14 × 21 cm. Rio de Janeiro, Museus Castro Maya, MEA 0298.

3. Jean-Baptiste Debret. Cousin and student of the neoclassical painter Jacques Louis David, Jean-Baptiste Debret (1768–1848) did very well as a historical painter during Napoleon's years. His prospects dimmed with the Emperor's fall and in 1816 he joined the French Artistic Mission to Brazil, where he stayed until 1831. The Mission's main goal was to open a Fine Arts Academy in Rio, which happened only in 1826, when Debret was appointed professor of historical painting. During his years in Rio, Debret worked mostly as a court painter, but also spent considerable time documenting the urban life, architecture, and landscape of Rio and, to a lesser extent, São Paulo and other villages of the Brazilian south and southwest. At an unknown date, he painted a watercolor depicting a Laurenty 7 pluriarc, accompanied by the observation "Viola d'Angola, Musica dos Pretos" (Guitar from Angola, Music of the Blacks) [fig. 11]. Debret depicted the instrument from three angles, in which are evident the main features of Pool Malebo pluriarcs. As seen above, these instruments are historically associated with the Téké, the main ethnic group of a kingdom that used to be centered in the Téké Plateau, the highland that stretched from Pool Malebo to southeast Gabon. This was the Anziku kingdom, to which subjects Luso-Brazilian traders referred as Anjico.⁵⁵ Debret's pluriarc is virtually identical to a Téké ngwomi drawn by Charles Callewaert in 1882,⁵⁶ as well as Téké instruments at Tervuren,⁵⁷ New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art,⁵⁸ and Rome's Museo Pigorini.⁵⁹ These sources reveal that the instrument's design remained stable for the past two hundred years.

Debret provided a succinct description of the instrument in the second volume of his *Voyage Pittoresque et Historique* of 1835:



12. Anonymous photographer from Petrópolis, "Black man holding an unidentified object" (late 19th century). Ruy Souza e Silva collection, São Paolo.

On the other hand, far away from this barbarism [i.e. from other parts of Africa], Benguela and Angola negroes should be mentioned as the best musicians, particularly remarkable for their industrious manufacturing of instruments, such as the marimba, the Angola guitar (*viole d'Angola*), a kind of lyre of four strings.⁶⁰

There is one problem with this account. By naming the instrument "*viola d'Angola*", Debret removed it from Téké hands and placed it hundreds of kilometers south of its well-documented location in the nineteenth century. The easiest explanation would be that the term "*viola d'Angola*" was crafted in a similar way as Spanish guitar and French horn. In Rio, Debret found a highly varied African population, with slaves from Central, East, and West Africa struggling to keep their practices and beliefs in a cosmopolitan environment and under the acculturating pressure of Brazilian-born blacks. Musical instruments from various points of Africa were a common sight in the streets of Rio and it would be hard – if not meaningless – for the free population to keep up with the correct nomenclature and provenance of each one of those instruments and their regional variants, say, by knowing the difference between a "*guitar*" from Angola and another one from Congo or Benguela. It is more logical to think that after an earlier usage became widely accepted, the term "*viola d'Angola*" became a white man's metonymy for pluriarcs, regardless of their origin.

Given the association between the Téké pluriarc and rituals of healing and possession by nkita water spirits, one could only speculate that Debret saw the instrument in the hands of a Central African nganga.

Although disperse, the Téké population in Rio—known as Anjico or Monjolo—was large enough to allow some retention of religious practices. The geography of the city and its surroundings, as well as the whole middle-passage experience, certainly gave special meaning to beliefs and rituals associated with the water, and some of the worries that would have prompted the establishment of an onkila society may have persisted for a while.⁶¹ A resourceful nganga should be able to find raw materials from the local botany to reconstitute his community's medicinal practices, while mastering the technology to rebuild the material culture involved in those complex rituals.

4. A Photographer in Petrópolis. The last visual record of pluriarcs in Brazil is a late nineteenth-century photograph taken in Petrópolis, or developed by a photographer of that city, fourty miles north of Rio de Janeiro [fig. 12]. It shows a black man holding a box-shaped, Laurenty 10 pluriarc, with four string carriers and four frame prolongations.⁶² The photographer is unknown, and so are the context and the exact date in which this picture was taken. The barefoot man is seated in front of a building, from which door a tall pile of sacks is visible. This was most likely a coffee storage building, as the region around Petrópolis was the largest coffee producer in nineteenth-century Brazil. The man embraces his instrument in the exact position one would hold a guitar. His right hand seems to hold a plectrum, and the left hand is positioned just above the strings, stopping or muting them. As seen above, this is how a player is able to alternate two chords while playing strumming style. The difference is that here the left hand is positioned in front of the strings with the palm of the hand facing the instrument, not behind the strings with the palm facing out.⁶³

In the early twentieth century, Baptist missionary John H. Weeks (1861–1924) associated this model of pluriarc—absent from most European collections and among the rarest in Tervuren—to a specific rite of passage of a Kongo secret society known as ndembo.⁶⁴ The ritual was performed as a community's response to traumatic events, such as epidemics, natural disasters, or even an oppressive rule, and involved a symbolic death and resurrection. Initiates were required to spend some time—from a couple of months to more than a year—in a secluded place far from their village, where they experienced a figurative death. After their resurrection, they received a new body that was immune to the affliction that plagued their community, learned a new language, were given a new name, and returned to their families as complete strangers. Weeks's interest on the subject followed the curiosity of another missionary, William Holman Bentley (1855–1905),⁶⁵ who worked in northern Angola and lower Congo a few years earlier. Although prejudiced, their descriptions agree in general terms with what Italian and Belgian Catholic missionaries have written about both ndembo and the similar but more prevalent kimpasi ritual, while providing additional details.⁶⁶ Claiming to have interacted with members of the ndembo society just south of Mbanza Kongo (then São Salvador), northern Angola, Weeks provided two conflicting pictures of the instrument called nsambi.⁶⁷ Both are box-shaped and have four string carriers, but only one, shown in a photo taken by missionary Frank Oldrieve, has frame prolongations just like the instrument from Petrópolis [fig. 13]. The player also uses a plectrum with the right hand and mutes the strings with the palm of the left hand facing out. This is how Weeks described its use:

In the lodges drums and horn trumpets are not allowed, for it would be somewhat absurd to play such instruments to the "dead". But when the inmates of the lodges desire to dance, a comparatively quiet instrument called *nsambi* is used. It is harp-like in tone, and is played with a small piece of splinter. The accompanying sketch was made from a small one in my possession. The music would not be heard very far in the forest, but it served the purpose of giving time to the dancers. This musical instrument must never be seen by the uninitiated. The strings are called *minza*, and are made by scraping down the hard outer bark or casing of the palm tree. The player is named *nembimbi*.⁶⁸

The use of a string instrument in the ritual is not mentioned in any available account on the kimpasi. Even so, Weeks stressed the connection between the ndembo and the kimpasi. Not only the rituals looked similar, but it appeared to him that in some places and times they actually were the same thing.⁶⁹ Likewise, Catholic missionary Joseph Van Wing (1884–1970) stated that the Nkanu, from Bas-Congo and the Angolan province of Uige, called their version of the society "kimpasi ki ndembo". He added that in other contexts, the term "ndembo" referred to the site in which the kimpasi was performed.⁷⁰ Connections between the Catholic Church and the kimpasi, particularly the reverence for Saint Anthony, are well documented. The early kingdom of Kongo was a center for Christian worship since the late fifteenth century and every local nganga would be



13. Photo by Frank Oldrieve included in John H. Weeks's *Among the Primitive Bakongo* (Philadelphia, 1914), taken probably in Lutete (earlier known as Wathen), 100 km southwest of Kinshasa in Congo. It shows a member of the ndembo society playing a nsambi.

more than interested in absorbing elements of foreign religions in order to increase and diversify his own kindoki, or spiritual power.⁷¹ Capuchin missionaries tried to crush the kimpasi in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries exactly because they regarded it as a Christian heresy, not a completely pagan ritual.⁷²

Could it be that the kimpasi-ndembo rituals were transplanted to the vicinity of Rio de Janeiro and that the player in the photograph, just like his Kongo counterpart, was in fact an nganga, initiated in the ndembo mysteries and with plenty of kindoki power? Robert W. Slenes has recently pointed out to the cultural and political dimensions of a slave rebellion centered in the coffee-producing town of Vassouras, not far from Petrópolis, in 1848. The judicial proceedings revealed that the rebels used Kongo words to describe some aspects of their society, which they called Ubanda, and their beliefs, practices, and organization resembled those of the Kongo secret societies kimpasi, ndembo, and bakhimba.⁷³ Among the similarities, the members were given a new name, learned a new language, and their rituals included spiritual possession and a veneration for Saint Anthony. Although the movement was suffocated just before the scheduled insurrection,

it was by no means an isolate event, as similar rebellions among Kongo slaves and their descendants also happened in the provinces of Espírito Santo and Minas Gerais. Slenes argues that these movements were important in the renegotiation of the social contract in the coffee farms of the southeast and even in the crafting of the 1850 law that prohibited the transatlantic slave trade.

OF ROOTS AND ROUTES. For Debret, building and playing musical instruments were skills that demonstrated how industrious some slaves could be. And by industrious he meant useful for their masters. The superficial similarity between pluriarcs and guitars and between marimbas and keyboard instruments, as well as the capability of some of them to play European melodies placed these instruments and their players in the “good” side of a spectrum that ranged from barbarism to civilization. Pluriarcs and marimbas were not perceived as dangerous as tabaques and other percussion instruments associated with batuques and calundus. Outlawed time and again, the tall drums used in the candomblé, tambor de mina, and jongo continued to be relevant and survived as symbols of resistance and authenticity. As for the hard-to-build and seemingly innocuous pluriarcs, they had in the portable and versatile guitar a fabulous adversary when the repertory of choice was secular, especially after mass-produced instruments became widely available.

Discussing the declining of Central African lamellophones in the twentieth century, Gerhard Kubik argued that with the availability of modern forms of transportation, people no longer needed to take long trips on foot, in which road songs were essential in preventing boredom.⁷⁴ The argument could be extended to pluriarcs as well, given that road songs are an important part of the tchihumba repertory that Kubik recorded in southwestern Angola in 1965. In Brazil, we can add that, after the outlawing of the transatlantic slave trade, the pluriarcs lost their connection with living socio-cultural practices of African-born slaves. As shown in nineteenth-century ads describing fugitive slaves who were musicians, while African-born slaves were often bimusical, Brazilian-born slaves were always described playing a European instrument. Besides, cattle herders who played the pluriarc in southern Angola were not transferred to Brazil as such, but were employed in a variety of other activities. And akpata players who used to sing epic ballads in the Benin court were not accompanied by the cultural and political context that created and nurtured them.

Playing a musical instrument on the streets would certainly help a *negro de ganho* – a slave who kept part of his earnings for himself – to negotiate his daily errands in the city, making him more visible, calling attention to the goods he was selling, and maybe even receiving donations from bystanders. But the pluriarc had a clear disadvantage when compared with other African instruments. With its several string carriers and a sometimes heavy resonator, it was a clumsy object for someone who had to carry goods for selling. Even so, this is how Guillobel and Chamberlain depicted it. Musically speaking, it was not versatile, allowing only a few chords in strumming style and hardly audible when plucked. The berimbau, a single-string musical bow, conveyed a greater deal of expression and performativity in a minimalistic, easy to build, and very portable design. Debret recounted in a lively way how a berimbau player would get the attention of bystanders.⁷⁵ But the most conspicuous African instrument in Brazil was the small and versatile lamellophone locally known as marimba (kissanji or mbira). A good performer, such as the eighteen-year old Congo shoemaker who ran away from his master in 4 October 1836, could play “all modas (i.e. Luso-Brazilian songs) on the marimba”,⁷⁶ a statement that reveals how an African-born slave was able to switch between different musical systems.

If the expertise on African instruments could have a limited impact in someone’s finances, becoming a barber musician was another story. These professionals were often able to buy their freedom, so numerous were the venues in which *música de barbeiros* was an essential component. For that purpose, proficiency on a wind instrument or the violin was necessary, and some band directors invested part of their resources in buying recently arrived Africans and training them in European musical instruments.⁷⁷ Guitars were sometimes used in barber bands too, but a good player and singer could get additional gigs in social events, in paraliturgical festivals, or, even better, by joining the circus as a clown musician and improviser – a path followed by Baiano, Eduardo das Neves and other pioneers of recording industry. As a final token that times had changed, the first samba ever recorded, *Pelo telefone*, with Baiano in 1917, brought the stamp of industrial modernity in its title and in the copyright controversy that followed its release. In a world built around the concepts of assembly line and mass entertainment, there was no place for pluriarcs, lamellophones, or even musical bows. Yet, their survival could still be determined by other factors.

In 1966, Mamadu Lewu, a Téké from Franceville, Gabon, described how the onkila ritual had a strong association with water spirits and bodies of water:

Women had gone to the river to fish. There they caught ONKILA. ONKILA came from the river ("Onkila ntsa djali o fi"). These are the women who caught it. They have brought it from the river and arrived at the house, it became ONKILA. The person who catches ONKILA shouts with strength, louder. It is mama wata who brought us ONKILA. It was said that only a few people catch ONKILA, one cannot catch the disease unless God ('Ndjam) has designated. Then one man, the Ngomi player, stands in the middle of the women, the patient is a woman, and he gathers all that it is necessary to heal. The ingredients for the treatment consist of the fruit Lendi, the plant lentsintsaghi, cola nut (biri), dimadima and lani leaves, items that are common to both ONGA and ONKILA dance.⁷⁸

Rather than blaming simbi or nkita water spirits, Lewu charged Mami Wata (Mommy Water) – an aquatic entity revered from the Ivory Coast to South Africa, and from South Carolina to Southeastern Brazil, where it is known as Mãe d'água – as the main figure responsible for bringing onkila to the community. In order for this truly pan-Atlantic cultural continuum to be formed, a common denominator had to be negotiated between entities that were otherwise incompatible – orishas, simbi, nkita, and nkisi. This syncretic process continued in the Americas, where Amerindian and European mythologies provided links to local ecosystems, technologies, and beliefs, thus assuring the validity of transplanted practices.

Of the pluriarchs documented in nineteenth-century Brazil, the Téké ngwomi, the Kongo nsambi, and the Lower-Congo ntsambi were used punctually in a few ethnically and geographically localized versions of more generalized Central African rituals. This connection certainly helped to convey an aura of power and mystery to the instrument, a visible display of kindoki for chiefs and healers in some communities. But with this restricted background and without the integral transplant of religious symbols they would hardly been able to survive past the first generation of Afro-Brazilians. Similarly to what happened with religious rituals, the profession of the nganga itself had to be reconfigured, optimized, by eliminating regionalisms in favor of unanimities. In this context, musical instruments that were not widely relevant were abandoned or substituted. A 1782 document describes this process in the making in the village of Pitangui, Minas Gerais:

The denounced [Roque Angola, a black man] is a sorcerer, as he cooks certain herbs in a large pot along with an image of Christ made out of brass, which he carries on his neck, and they bathed themselves on this water, and after dressing themselves with their finest clothes, they started some dances or calundus, while mother Brígida asks her son João to play a viola [guitar], and the said black man played an adufe [square tambourine] and they danced with many grimaces and moves and gave the attendants certain ingredient to smell, which they had on a tinplate and that after smelling it they said they became engrossed and out of their minds.⁷⁹

The Inquisition proceedings describe a ritual centered on the use of a psychedelic substance, like the Central African iboga or the Northern Brazilian jurema. Roque, an Ambundu or southern Kongo nganga, treated the image of Christ as if it were an nkisi, a vessel of kindoki power. In the contemporary umbanda, Catholic images are submitted to a similar process – the *banho de imantação* – in order to be "magnetized", that is, to have their positive and negative energies calibrated. In the description, João played the European just like an nsambi pluriarc or an ngomi harp are played in liboka-iboga ceremonies. The herb bath is a clear reminiscent of the banho-de-cheiro, prevalent throughout Brazil, but especially meaningful in the catimbó and umbanda. But even with all these analogies, the description does not prove that Roque's calundu was a specific transplantation of the iboga-liboka, nor that it was a unique forerunner of catimbó and umbanda. What it does show is that the reconfiguration of religious practices and beliefs demanded the substitution of raw materials and technologies while an essential core of beliefs, gestures, and symbols remained.

West-African religions based on the reverence to orishas and voduns were also reconfigured in order to remain relevant to black populations in Brazil, a process that involved reduction – from hundreds to no more than sixteen elemental entities – and recontextualization, in some cases allowing the absorption of elements from Bantu and Amerindian beliefs. As for the retention of specific musical instruments in religious contexts, the more traditional *tendas de candomblé* take a firm stance on using only "authentic" and expensive hand-made instruments, while others are fine with mass-produced versions of tall drums.⁸⁰ With the name "marimba", the berimbau, is present in the tereko religion of Maranhão state. A possession and healing

ritual, the tereko has ties to West and Central Africa and is based on the veneration of the encantados, analogous to the simbi and nkita water spirits. Knowledge of the medicinal and hallucinogenic properties of specific plants is provided by links to the Amerindian pajelança ritual, while also guaranteeing access to the local spiritual world.⁸¹ Of course, the berimbau thrives in more secular contexts as well. Its role in the reinvention of capoeira in the early twentieth century is well documented, and it has been widely used in Brazilian jazz and popular music since the 1970s.⁸² But the pluriarc in Brazil did not experience any "authentic" retention, revival, or creative reinvention. Or should we say not yet?

Political independence, migration, missionary work, urbanization, and war, among other factors, play a role in the assimilation, reevaluation, or abandoning of specific cultural practices and artifacts on both sides of the Atlantic. The pluriarc was able to keep its relevancy in some areas of Congo and Angola by being reevaluated and recontextualized. In the 1940s Congo, Manuel d'Oliveira, a former nsambi player from São Salvador, Angola, was a key figure in the development of the Congolese rumba. His guitar-playing style is still influential today.⁸³ Before playing the guitar, Samba Ngo, a musician from the village of Dibulu, Democratic Republic of Congo, now living in Santa Cruz, California, learned the nsambi with his father, who was an herbal healer. Samba grew up listening to the chants and songs he used in healing rituals. Critics emphasize his unorthodox playing style, crediting it to his previous experience with the nsambi.⁸⁴ Biahua ("Papa") Come, a Congolese storyteller and healer based in Ann Arbor, Michigan, is advertised as possessing a knowledge of thousands of years that is brought to life in the sounds of the nsambi.⁸⁵ The first two accounts portray the nsambi as a supplier of a specific musical background that influences an artist's musical style and provides a link with both tradition and the spiritual world. By the accounts of Samba Ngo and Papa Come, the nsambi is also capable of opening a door to an ancient, more natural time and space. In this case, the fast-paced urban life does not accelerate the demise of this instrument, but rather, persuade us to find in it a source of relief and comfort in it.

Meanwhile, in the vicinity of Benguela, in postwar Angola, Rodrigo Sekulo and Inácio Chigando use this instrument to accompany their narrative songs about the horrors of the war. The healer Miranda Nisa from Kanhelenlā Baixa still uses his tchisumba while helping individuals from his community. And the widely traveled avant-garde composer Victor Gama, after seeing children in his home country Angola building their instruments out of trashed war equipment, decided to carry on a project to foster cultural understanding by teaching children in industrialized countries to build their own tchihumbas. At the same time, Victor persuaded the Kronos Quartet to commission Angolan children to build instruments for their most recent production.

If, as Paul Gilroy contends, diaspora is more about "routes" than "roots", the paths the pluriarc has taken in the past five hundred years reflect some of the dynamics of this process. Once relatively common in a city like Rio de Janeiro, pluriarcs met a historical dead end, while the cultures that created them flourished in formidable and unexpected ways in the new environment. In the twentieth-first-century Congo-Angola region, pluriarcs are being reified as symbols of resistance against violence and modernization, or as a way of coming to terms with a traumatic past. It is as a symbol that they are being exported to Europe and North America. Strong symbols that conjure memories of subjugation, resilience, and adaptation. In Brazil, the pluriarc lays dormant for now. But when needed back, tomorrow or in the next century, it will certainly wake up.

NOTES

¹ George W. Stow, *The Native Races of South Africa* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1905), 107-109.

² In 1922, Dorothea Bleek showed Stow's drawing to a Naron-speaking Khoisan, to which he replied: "that is not an instrument, all the men coming to the dance have put down their bows in one place, and one man is playing on them. We sometimes do it at dances." Dorothea Bleek, *The Naron, a Bushman Tribe of the Central Kalahari* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

1928), 21-22.

³ Except in quotations, I omit Bantu prefixes (Ba-, Ova-, and Va-) when referring to ethnicities.

⁴ Bernhard Ankermann, "Die afrikanischen Musikinstrumente", *Ethnologisches Notizblatt* III/1 (1902), 1-134: 17-22, 78-80.

⁵ Bernhard Ankermann, "Kulturkreise und Kulturschichten in Afrika", *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* XXXVII/1 (1905), 54-90.

⁶ See Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-One Issues and Concepts* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 325-326.

⁷ Nicholas England, *Music among the Zhu/wa-si of South West Africa and Botswana* (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1968).

⁸ Jean-Sébastien Laurenty, *Les cordophones du Congo Belge et Ruanda-Urundi* (Tervuren: Musée du Congo Belge, 1960).

⁹ Later purchases included pluriarcs from southwest Africa.

¹⁰ Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology*, 320-326.

¹¹ Åke Norborg, *A Handbook of Musical and other Sound-Producing Instruments from Equatorial Guinea and Gabon* (Stockholm: Musekmuseet, 1989), 286-287.

¹² Gerhard Kubik, "Pluriarc", Grove Music Online <www.oxfordmusiconline.com> (accessed 3 November 2013).

¹³ Nicholas England, *Music Among the Zhu/wa-si and Related Peoples of Namibia, Botswana, and Angola* (New York: Garland, 1995 [1968]), 119-120. Photos of this type of pluriarc appeared in a number of publications, including George Schwab, *Tribes of the Liberian Hinterland* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Peabody Museum, 1947), figs. 78c, 80c, and 81e. In 1989 Norborg placed this type of pluriarc in the fifth group of his classification.

¹⁴ Ankermann, *Afrikanische Musikinstrumente*, 21-22, identified it as a three-string instrument belonging to the Bule (Bulu Fang) and Norborg, *Handbook*, 299-301, mentioned that it is found among the Fang under the names akadañkama, akam, akarañkam, ayine, ékakira, and ndeñe. Norborg also included references to a number of early to mid-twentieth century records. See also Ulrich Wegner, *Afrikanische Saiteninstrumente* (Berlin: Museum für Volkerkunde, 1984), 83.

¹⁵ Pierre Sallée, *Un aspect de la musique des Batéké: Le grand pluriarc NGOMI et sa place dans la danse ONKILA* (Dakar: Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres, 1966). Revised and reprinted in *Deux études sur la musique du Gabon* (Paris: O.R.S.T.O.M., 1978). Sallée expanded his research on harps and pluriarcs of Gabon in *L'arc et la harpe: Contribution à l'histoire de la musique du Gabon* (Ph.D. diss., Université de Paris X, 1985).

¹⁶ This recording is held at the CNRS archive, along with related audio and video material by Sallée, Rouget, and Popper. This piece was included in the LP *Gabon: Musiques des Mitsogho et des Batéké* (Ocora France, OCR 84, 1984) and in the more recent CD *Atege Songs* (Ocora France, 560199, 2004), a commercial release of the CD that accompanies Le Bomin's 2004 book.

¹⁷ Sylvie Le Bomin, *Musiques Bateke, Mpa Atege* (Saint-Maur-des-Fossés: Editions Sépia, 2004).

¹⁸ In field notes and recordings hosted at the Centre de Recherche en Ethnomusicologie CREM-CNRS, Sallée used the spelling saambi for the Vili and tsambi for the Eshira pluriarc. <archives.crem-cnrs.fr>

¹⁹ Sallée, *L'arc et la harpe*, 100-101.

²⁰ Michel Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum Theatrum Instrumentorum seu Sciographia*. II: *De organographia* (Wolfenbüttel, 1620), pl. XXXI.

²¹ "En effet, le pluriarc est parfois l'apanage exclusif du guérisseur (dans ce cas les cordes sont ébranlées avec un plectre) donc instrument 'sacré'; au point que lors des conversions au christianisme ou aux religions messianiques apparentées, on le rencontre souvent parmi les objets 'fétiches' que les nouveaux adeptes rejettent publiquement en signe de renoncement aux valeurs de la religion traditionnelle." Charles Duvelle, *Musique Kongo: Ba bambé, ba-congo, ba-congo-nseke, ba-lari* (Paris: Disques Ocora / Radio France, OCR35, 1967), booklet notes, [3].

²² Laurenty, *Les cordophones*, 176-177.

²³ "Il forme comme chez les Teke et les Mfinu, l'instrument de musique de la vie privée. L'indigène en joue lorsqu'il est assis sous le hangar du forgeron; lorsqu'au soir réunis devant une hutte quelconque, ils parlent des événements du jour, ou qu'ils se reposent des fatigues, tabac qui passe de bouche en bouche. Dans ce cas, il se sert d'un lukombe de petite dimension, facile à manier et à transporter et dont les sons ne sont que peu intenses." Johannes Maes, "Les Lukombe ou instruments de musique à cordes des populations du Kasai – Lac Léopold II.", *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* LXX/3-5 (1938), 240-254: 246.

²⁴ England, *Music among the Zhu/wa-si*.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 131, 141-143, 159.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 143, 161.

²⁷ Also spelled chihumba, cihumba, otjhumba, otisumba, and tchisumba, among other variants. This inconsistency can be partially credited to the way missionaries, explorers, and scholars used different European languages as reference when trans-literating the same word.

²⁸ José Redinha, *Instrumentos Musicais de Angola* (Coimbra: Centro de Estudos Africanos, 1984), 122, fig. 28, shows a drawing of an otxiumba, calling it "Lira dos pastores Ambós" (Ambo shepherds' lyre). However, there is no account of the instrument being used by the Ambo in Angola. Redinha's drawing is actually a copy of a Nyaneka-Nkhumbi instrument which appeared in Carlos Estermann, *Etnografia do Sudoeste de Angola. II: Grupo Étnico Nhaneca-Humbe* (Lisbon: Junta de Investigações do Ultramar, 1957), 200, fig. I. In another publication, Estermann affirmed "Contrary to what happens with [their neighbors], the Kwanyama and related peoples [i.e. the Ambo] do not play a kind of five-string viola [guitar]." *Etnografia do Sudoeste de Angola. I: Os Povos Nôo-Bantôos e o Grupo Étnico dos Ambós* (Lisbon: Junta de Investigações do Ultramar, 1956), 183-184

²⁹ England, *Music among the Zhu/wa-si*, 127.

³⁰ Lang and Tasetevin, who visited the Nyaneka in 1912, stated that the five-string pluriarc was called "otyi humba" and the six-string version "otyi n dyalindia". They also noticed that the thumb had the function of changing the pitches, while the index would pluck the strings. Alphonse Lang, Constant Tastevin, *La Tribu des Va-Nyaneka* (Corbeil: Imprimerie Crété, 1937), 117. A transcription of the vocal part of a song accompanied by an otyi humba is given at pages 127 and 139.

³¹ Kubik explained that the two songs he recorded in the vicinity of Dinde described how difficult used to be the journey on foot to Benguela, and how musicians cheered up the spirits of travelers. Another song stressed compassion towards destitute neighbors. Gerhard Kubik, *Muziek van de Humbi en de Handa uit Angola* (Tervuren: Museum voor Midden-Afrika, 1973); *Angolan Traits in Black Music, Games, and Dances of Brazil* (Lisbon: Junta de Investigações Científicas do Ultramar, 1979). Kubik's 1965 tchi-humba recordings are deposited at Vienna's Phonogrammarchiv: <catalog.phonogrammarchiv.at>.

³² Victor Gama, coord., *Tsikaya: Músicos do interior*. Available at <tsikaya.org>.

³³ Dan Ben-Amos, *Sweet Words: Storytelling Events in Benin* (Philadelphia: ISHI, 1975).

³⁴ The pluriarc kounou, of the Bambara of Guinea is featured in "Moribé", chant de louange, Jean Koroma (78rpm disc, s.l.: Africavox, A100-01, 1953); the pluriarc gbegbetele, of the Kpelle of Liberia appears in two Folkways recordings: "Kpelle Harp / Kpelle Band", with Pepe Kroma, Folk music of Liberia (CD Folkways FW04465, Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1954);

"Poro entertainment song", with Tokpa Pee-pee of Ponata, *Music of the Kpelle of Liberia* (CD Folkways FW04385, Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1972).

³⁵ Sekou Camara, "The Dan: A Disappearing Instrument", *Somono Bala of the Upper Niger: River People, Charismatic Bards, and Mischievous Music in a West African Culture*, ed. by David Conrad (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 59-78.

³⁶ Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira, "Diário da Viagem Philosophica pela Capitania de São José do Rio Negro", *Revista trimestral do Instituto Histórico, Geographico e Etnographico do Brazil* XLIX (1º trimestre de 1886), 123-288, at 216-217.

³⁷ Manuel Nunes Dias, *A Companhia Geral do Grão Pará Maranhão, 1755-1778* (Belém: UFPA, 1970).

³⁸ This watercolor is the earliest representation of a pluriarc in Brazil, and one of the very few depictions anywhere of an Ankerman Vlc instrument prior to the twentieth century. Before Ankermann's 1901 depiction of a "Saiteninstrument der Ovambo" (*Die Afrikanische Musikinstrumente*, 21), Paiva Couceiro included a drawing of a "chiumba" in his *Relatório de viagem entre Bailundo e as terras do Mucusso* (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1892), 171. Gerhard Kubik recognized a chihumba in Codina/Freire drawing in his pioneer study *Angolan Traits in Black Music, Games, and Dances of Brazil* (Lisbon: Junta de Investigações do Ultramar, 1979), 45-46.

³⁹ The Museu Nacional de Etnologia in Lisbon has pluriarcs Nkhumbi (AA349 tchiumba/viola de arcos; AB369 tchiumba/lira of the Mwila; AG388 lira; AG389 lira) and Mukubal (AG563 otxihumba/lira), two pluriarcs without identification, but certainly from southwestern Angola (AO759, no name or provenance; AO219, no name or provenance), and three from northern Angola (AE461, kibussa, of the Mahungo; AO212, no name rovance; GO10, no name, of the Mussorongo). The Musée d'Etnographie, in Geneva, also has pluriarcs Humbi (ETHMU 37691, ocisumba) and Himba (ETHMU 053985, otjihumba), the Koninklijk Museum voor Midden-Afrika, in Tervuren has one Ambo pluriarc (MO.1993.23.81), and so does the Ethnologisches Museum, in Berlin (III D 1627).

⁴⁰ Contemporary players in Benguela alternate thumb and index finger of both hands. See recent recordings of players Inácio Chigando, Manuel Garoto, and Miranda Niva in the project Tsikaya, coordinated by Victor Gama: <www.tsikaya.org>.

⁴¹ Laurenty, *Les cordophones*, 48-50.

⁴² England, *Music among the Zulu/wā-si*, 129

⁴³ Marcus Wood, *Black Milk: Imagining Slavery in the Visual Cultures of Brazil and America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 300.

⁴⁴ Guillobel's watercolor "Bandeira do Divino" (Cândido Guinle de Paula Machado collection, Rio de Janeiro) depicts two free mulattoes playing Luso-Brazilian guitars (violas).

⁴⁵ This is confirmed by the large number of ads denouncing fugitive slaves and ads of slaves for sale published in Brazilian newspapers throughout the nineteenth century. Many of these ads identify a variety of musical instruments being played by African and Brazilian-born slaves, most of them being European instruments.

⁴⁶ Obituary and bibliographical sketch in *The Gentleman's Magazine* 22 (August 1844), 267.

⁴⁷ Henry Chamberlain, *Views and Costumes of the City and Neighborhood of Rio de Janeiro in 1819-1820* (London: Columbian Press, 1822), n.n. The publisher mentioned in the initial address "the realiance which may be placed on the fidelity of the representations of his tasteful pencil, which has been correctly followed

in the Engravings." Although we do not know if Chamberlain supervised the production of these lithographs, a look at some of his extant drawings and watercolors at the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo and Museu de Arte de São Paulo reveals that the final published results are generally accurate. The main discrepancy in the lithographs is a tendency to depict the figures in a more realistic fashion than the quasi-caricature style of Guillobel, which Chamberlain emulates in his drawings and watercolors.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pl. 29.

⁴⁹ Laurenty, *Les cordophones*, instruments 232 and 235.

⁵⁰ Among Laurenty 7 pluriarcs, there is a *sambi*, played in the Kwango territory and among the Songo. Instrument 257 is called *ntsambi*, it was built by a Makaba man of the Kiandu village, Luozi territory, tribe Sundi. Instrument 256 is called *saambi*, and was bought at Gadangala, Mbala tribe, Kikwit territory. Instrument 259 is called *saambi*, and was collected at the village Kipoy, Saamba tribe. Laurenty, *Les cordophones*, 116-118, 139-146.

⁵¹ For plucking-style accompaniments recorded in 1970 see the LP *Musiques de l'Ancien Royaume Kubo* (Ocra, OCR 061, 1970), tracks B3 and B4. The booklet has a picture of the lakwemi player, fig. 5, at p. 8.

⁵² Giovanni Antonio Cavazzi da Montecuccolo, *Istorico descrizione de tre regni Congo, Matamba ed Angola* (Bologna: Giacomo Monti, 1687), 166.

⁵³ "L'altro chiamasi Nsambi, è à modo di Chitarrina, ma senza manico; in luogo di cui contiene cinque archetti, con le corde di fila di palma, e volendole ridurre à consonanza, fanno ch'entrino più, ò meno gli archetti nel concauo: Suonasi con l'indice d'entrambe le mani, dandosigli l'appoggio auanti del petto. Il suono se è fieuale per la sua piccolezza, nulla di meno non disgrada all'vdito." Girolamo Merolla, *Breve e succincta relatione del viaggio nel regno di Congo nell'Africa Meridionale* (Napoli: Francesco Mollo, 1692), 173.

⁵⁴ Antonio de Oliveira Cadornega, *História geral das guerras angolanas*, 1680 (Lisbon: Agência-Geral do Ultramar, 1972), vol. 3, 362.

⁵⁵ The most numerous ethnic labels that Luso-Brazilian traders used were Angola, Benguela, Congo, Cabinda, Monjolo or Anjico, Mina, and Moçambique.

⁵⁶ Koninklijk Museum voor Midden-Afrika, Tervuren, HO. 0.1.3111: Charles Callewaert (1855-1945) "Instruments de musique", 19 × 29 cm, dated 22 April 1882.

⁵⁷ See instruments 211 and 213 in Laurenty, *Les cordophones*, pl. XVIII.

⁵⁸ Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, accession number 89.4.548: pluriarc, late 19th century, Congo district, 73.7 × 15.2 × 8.9 cm.

⁵⁹ Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico "Luigi Pigorini," Rome, inv. 34084: pluriarc Teke, Congo, Collezione Brazzà-Pecile, 1887, 63 × 13 × 10 cm.

⁶⁰ "Bien loin de cette barbarie, au contraire, les nègres Bengueles et Angolais doivent être cités comme les plus musiciens, et sont surtout remarquables par l'industrieuse fabrication de leurs instruments, tels que le marimba, la viole d'Angola, espèce de lyre à quatre cordes." Jean-Baptiste Debret, *Voyage Pittoresque et Historique au Brésil* (Paris: Didot, 1835), vol. 2, 129.

⁶¹ According to Mary Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1850* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 12-15, eight Téké (Monjolo) slaves were buried by Rio's Santa Casa de Misericórdia in 1833, twenty in 1838, and twenty-five in 1849. These numbers amount to ten percent of all slaves from the so-called North Congo area, which included Cabinda, Congo (Re-

public of Congo and Democratic Republic of Congo), and Gabon, and 4.5 percent of all Western-Central African slaves buried in those three years. In the typical year of 1821, when Debret was in Rio, 15,201 slaves from West-Central Africa arrived in Rio. About the retention of water-spirit beliefs see Robert W. Slenes, "The Great Porpoise-Skull Strike: Central African Water Spirits and Slave Identity in Early-Nineteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro", *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora*, ed. by Linda M. Heywood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 183-208.

⁶² Although not identical, a similar instrument in Tervuren is the pluriarc number MO.0.0.3652, originally from Matadi, lower Congo, and acquired by the museum on 24 June 1912. Lauter, *Les cordophones*, no. 241.

⁶³ The neat case that lies open by the player's side could suggest good care with the instrument, but it seems that the case, the wooden sticks, and a piece of cloth right next to him are just the photographer's equipment.

⁶⁴ John H. Weeks, "Notes on Some Customs of the Lower Congo People", *Folklore* XX/2 (June 1909), 181-201; and *Among the Primitive Bakongo* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1914), 158-167.

⁶⁵ Holman Bentley, *Pioneering in Congo* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1900) vol. 1, 282-287.

⁶⁶ Carlo Toso, *L'anarchia Congolese nel sec. XVIII: La relazione inedita di Marcellino D'Atri* (Genoa: Bozzi, 1984), 199-204; Edouard de Jonghe, "Les Sociétés Secrètes au Bas Congo", *Revue des questions scientifiques*, 3rd series, XII (July 1907), 451-522. Joseph Van Wing, *Études Bakongo. II: Religion et Magie* (Bruxelles: Institut Royal Colonial Belge, 1938).

⁶⁷ Weeks, "Notes on Some Customs", 198; idem, *Among the Primitive Bakongo*, plates between pages 160-161 and 188-189. Frank Oldrieve probably took the picture in Lutete, earlier known as Wathen (100 km southwest of Kinshasa), where he was stationed.

⁶⁸ Weeks, *Among the Primitive Bakongo*, 167.

⁶⁹ Weeks, *ibid.*, claimed that in Lutete, where he was stationed from 1905 to 1912, the ndembo society went by the name kimpasi.

⁷⁰ Van Wing, *Études Bakongo*, 172-173.

⁷¹ About the meanings and uses of kindoki, see Jason R. Young, *Rituals of Resistance: African Atlantic Religion in Kongo and the Lowcountry South in the Era of Slavery* (New Orleans: Louisiana State University Press, 2007), 112 and Wyatt MacGaffey, "Aesthetics and Politics of Violence in Central Africa", *Journal of African Cultural Studies* XIII/1 (June 2000), 63-75.

⁷² John K. Thornton, *The Kongolese Saint Anthony* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). See also Robert W. Slenes, "Saint Anthony at the Crossroads in Kongo and Brazil", *Africa, Brazil, and the Construction of Trans-Atlantic Black Identities*, ed. by Livio Sansone et al (Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, 2008), 209-254.

⁷³ Robert W. Slenes, "A Árvore de Nsanda Transplantada: Cultos Kongo de Aflição e Identidade Escrava no Sudeste Brasileiro", *Trabalho Livre Trabalho Escravo*, ed. by Douglas C. Libby and Júnia F. Furtado (São Paulo: Annablume, 2006), 273-314.

⁷⁴ Kubik, *Angolan traits*, 44.

⁷⁵ Debret, *Voyage Pittoresque*, 2:128-9.

⁷⁶ "Escravos fugidos", *Diário do Rio de Janeiro* (7 November

1836).

⁷⁷ The life of one of these professionals, Antonio José Dutra, formerly Antonio Congo, is recounted by Zephyr L. Frank, *Dutra's World: Wealth and Family in Nineteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2004), and Silvana Cassab Jeha, "Ganhar a vida: Uma história do barbeiro africano Antonio José Dutra e sua família. Rio de Janeiro, Século XIX", *Usos do Passado: XII Encontro Regional de História* (Rio de Janeiro, ANPUH, 2006). Available online: <dc198.4shared.com/doc/A7GrNFL0/preview.html> (accessed 1 November 2013).

⁷⁸ "Des femmes étaient allées à la rivière pour y pêcher. C'est là qu'elle[s] ramassèrent ONKILA. ONKILA est venu de la rivière ("Onkila ntsa djali o fi"). Ce sont les femmes qui l'ont ramassé. Elles l'avaient apporté de la rivière et arrivées à la maison, c'était devenu ONKILA. Le sujet qui attrape ONKILA crie avec force, grossit. C'est un «esprit» (*mama wata*) qui nous a apporté ONKILA. On a dit que peu de personnes attrapent ONKILA, ne peut attraper cette maladie que celle que Dieu ('Ndjami) a désigné. Alors un seul homme, le joueur de Ngomi, se met au milieu des femmes, la malade étant une femme, et l'on prend tout ce qu'il faut pour la soigner. Ce matériel de soin se compose du fruit, *lendi*, de la plante *lentsintsaghi*, de la noix de cola (*biri*), des feuilles *dimadima* et *lani*, matériel commun à la danse ONGA et ONKILA." Sallée, *Un aspect*, 14.

⁷⁹ "O denunciado [Roque Angola, negro] é feiticeiro, pois cozinha num grande tacho certas ervas junto com uma imagem de Cristo de latão que traz no pescoço e nesta água se lavavam e após vestirem a melhor roupa principiavam umas danças ou calundus mandando mãe Brígida a seu filho João tocar uma viola, e o tal negro tocava um adufe e dançavam com muitos trejeitos e mudanças e davam a cheirar a todos os circunstantes certo ingrediente que tinham em uma folha de flandres e que depois de cheirar, diziam que ficavam abortos e fora de si." Lisbon, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Caderno do Promotor, 130. Quoted by Luiz Mott, "Feiticeiros de Angola na América Portuguesa, Vítimas da Inquisição", *Revista Pós Ciencias Sociais* V/9-10 (January-December 2008), 85-104.

⁸⁰ Manufactured by companies like Gope and BNB. In order to be accepted at a *tenda*, these instruments need to have their acrylic skin replaced by a natural one, after which they can be consecrated.

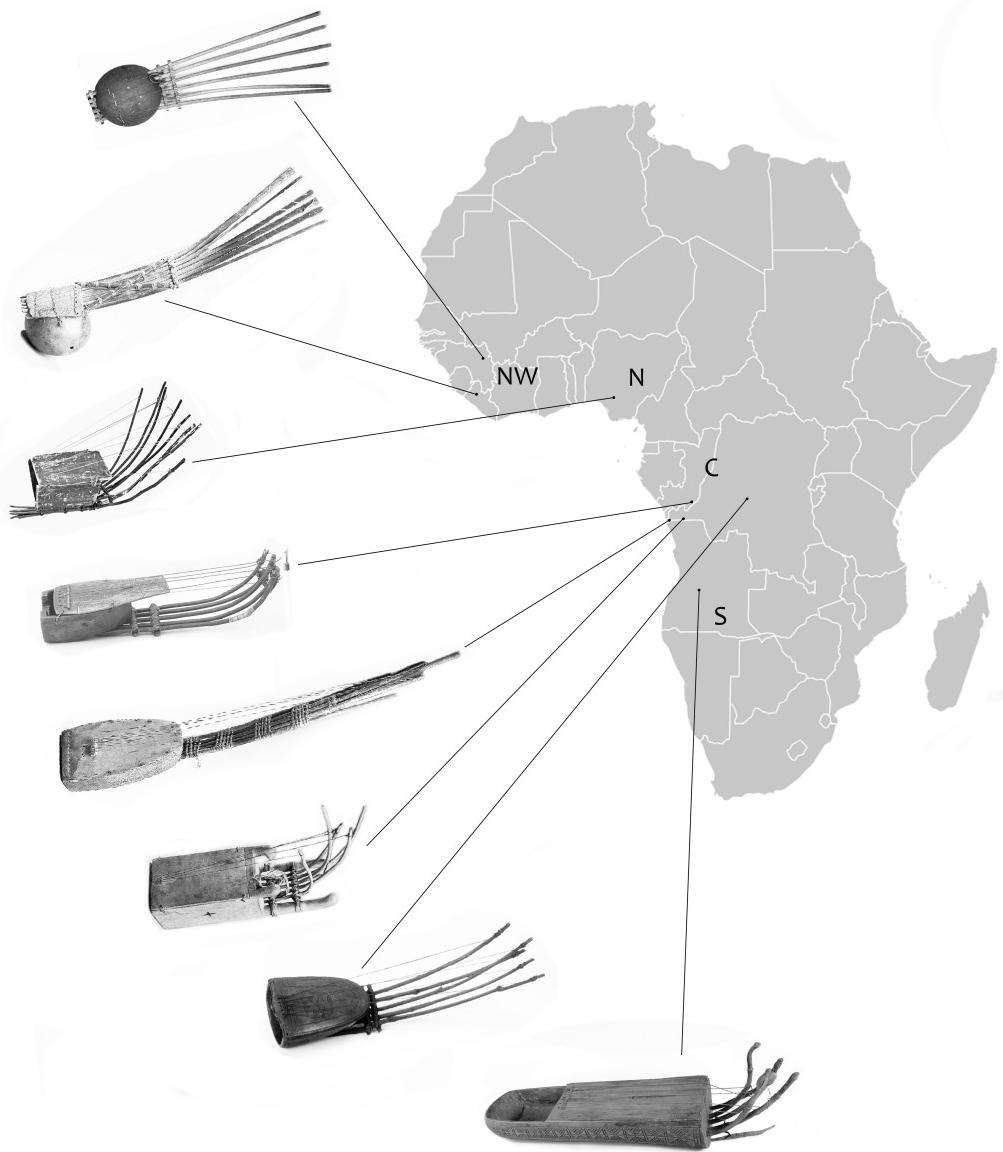
⁸¹ Octavio da Costa Eduardo, *The Negro in Northern Brazil: A Study in Acculturation* (New York: J.J. Augustin, 1948), 57-66. Encantaria de Mundicarmo Ferreti, "Bárbara Soeira": Codó, capital da magia negra? (São Paulo: Siciliano, 2001), plate [2]. See Matthias Röhrig Assunção, *Capoeira: The History of an Afro-Brazilian Martial Art* (London: Routledge, 2005).

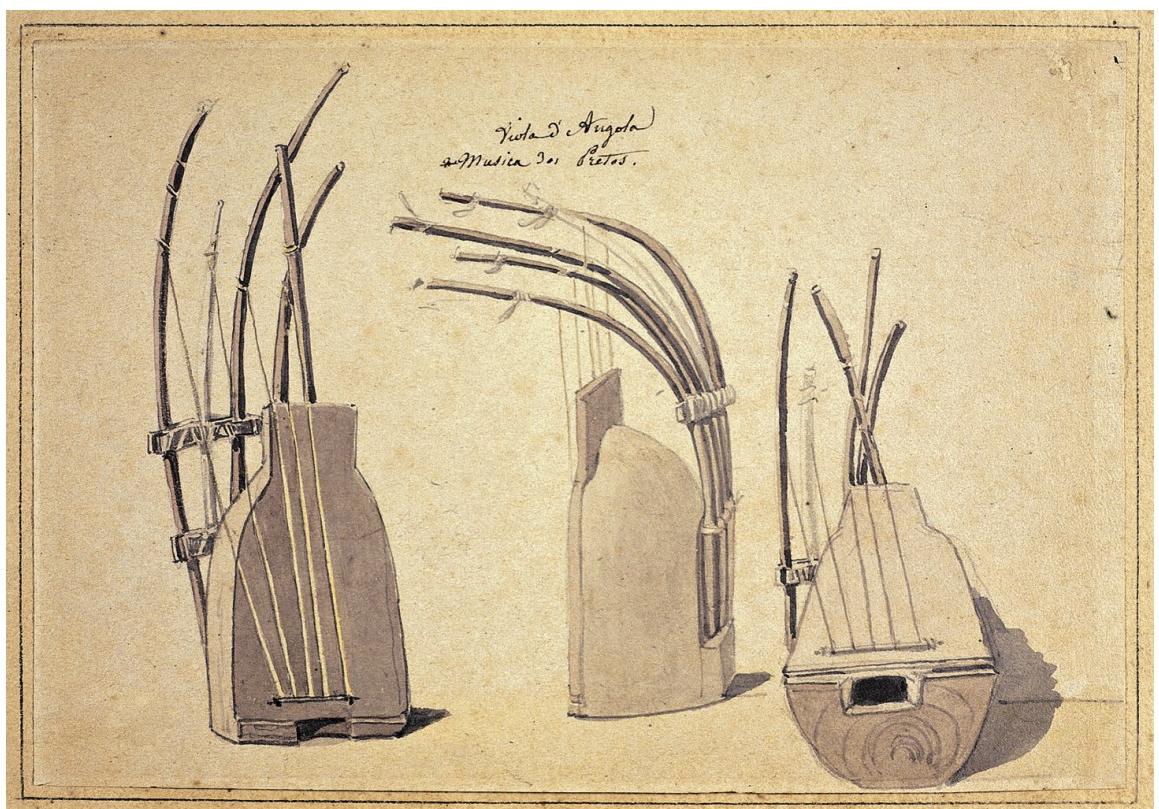
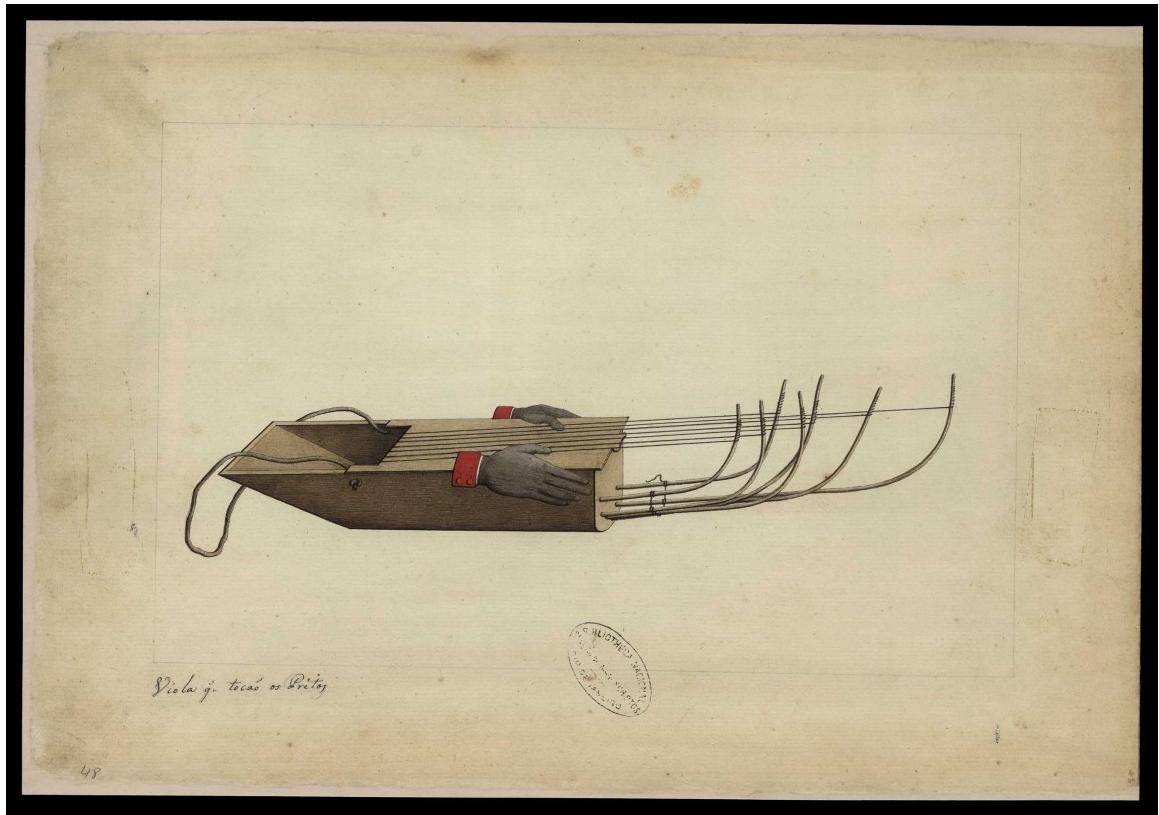
⁸² See Matthias Röhrig Assunção, *Capoeira: The History of an Afro-Brazilian Martial Art* (London: Routledge, 2005).

⁸³ Jomo Fortunato, "Processo de formação da música popular angolana", *Jornal de Angola Online* (19 October 2009). <jornal.deangola.sapo.ao/cultura/musica/processo_de_formacao_da_musica_popular_angolana> (accessed 3 November 2013).

⁸⁴ Samba Ngo, Biography. <www.last.fm/music/Samba+Ngo/+wiki> (accessed 3 November 2013).

⁸⁵ Biahua ("Papa") Come, Master Griot (storyteller) and Nsambi player, *The Mbongi Family*. <www.mbongivillage.org/family.html#biahua> (accessed 3 November 2013).











Croûte de Poisson par J.C. Gmelin

